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Deeper and Deeper *The Editors*

THE NEW REPUBLIC

May 22, 1965, 35 cents

Is Peace Still Possible?

Edgar Snow

The Klan on Trial — *Murray Kempton*

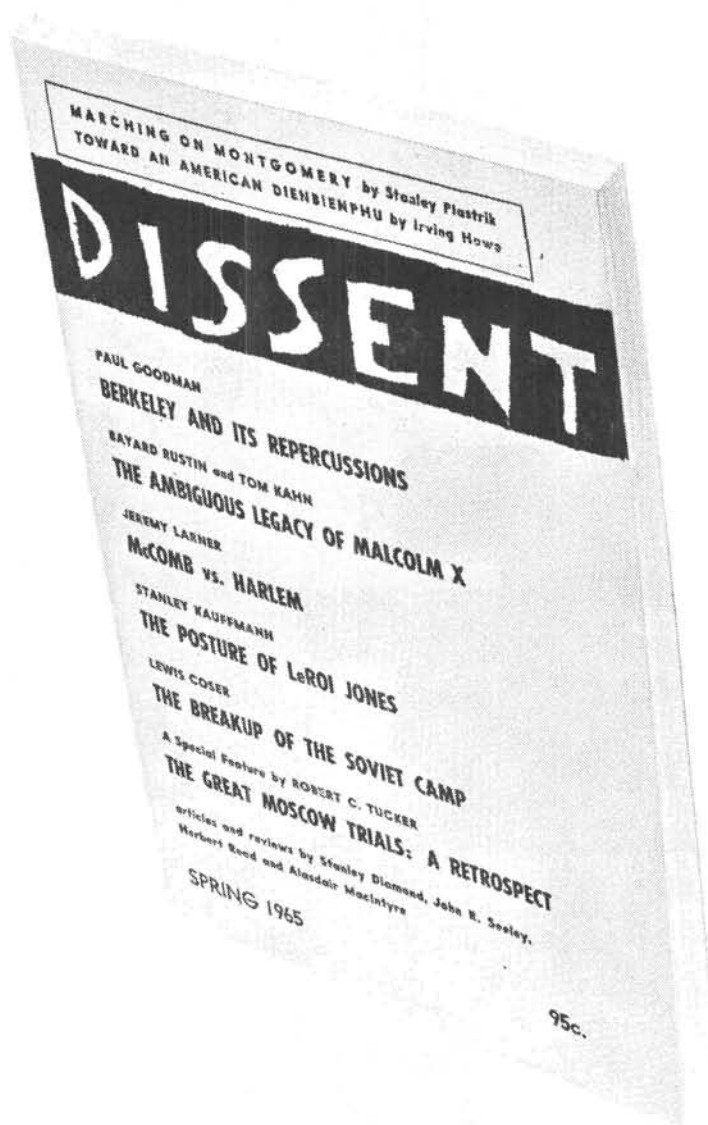
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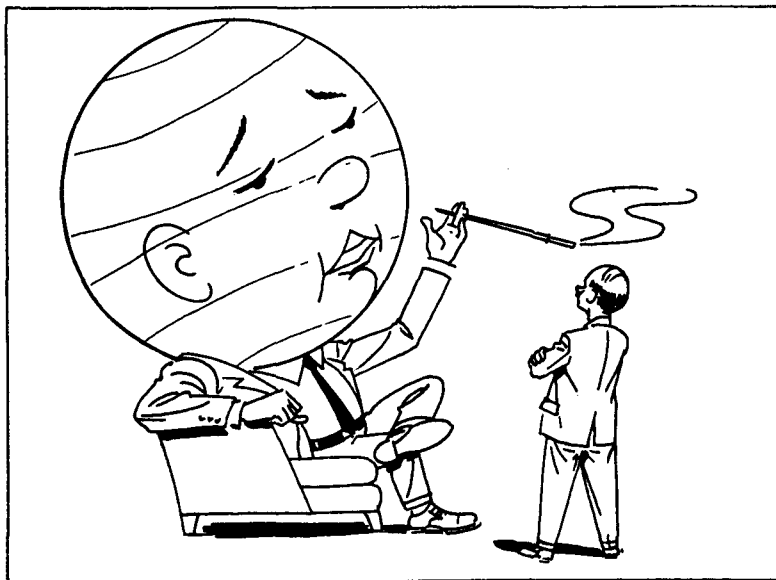
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Man Interviews World About Art

WORLD: Don't you see, Man, if you want to understand Art, *study ME* — not the art works themselves. It's what happens right here on my surface that determines whether art works are "good" or "bad" — not the qualities of the art works themselves.

MAN: You mean it's mainly a gamble.

WORLD: Of course. Don't be so shocked. It's natural. When, as a result of a new invention, something becomes easy to do which was formerly hard to do — when sensations which had been rare become commonplace — thousands of previously "great" art works sink into oblivion. They become superfluous. What else could you expect? And accidents as to who does or does not get born and who does or does not survive can have even more far-reaching effects. For instance, let me tell you something about Mozart, whom you earthlings are so enthusiastic about just now. Eighteen men, practically duplicates of him were living on me at the same time he was. If they had all attained full achievement — instead of succumbing to various misfortunes — you would probably be referring to *Jupiter Symphony* as merely another mediocre musical composition among hundreds. An unusual case, you think? No more than countless others I have seen. Continents rise and fall; ice ages come and go; highly exceptional men make their appearance for no discernible reason. But don't draw the wrong conclusion. That doesn't mean I am completely unpredictable. I have certain trends and likelihoods. As I said, *Study me*, and you can learn to make fairly dependable short-term guesses about art, more or less as a meteorologist can in forecasting the weather. And with experience you can gradually do better and better.

MAN: You mean there are no immortal art works which will be eternally beautiful, no matter what happens? But everybody says . . .

WORLD: Please don't make me laugh too hard — I might explode through one of my extinct volcanoes. Well . . . it's been an interesting talk. You look cute in clothes. I remember you when you wore a tail and nothing else. Goodbye, and don't let the "wise guys" bluff you any more.

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"No words that man can any more set side by side can ever affect the mind again like some of the great passages of Homer."

"Art Is Too Important To Kid Yourself About"

No branch of knowledge ever accomplished anything useful so long as it was dominated by mystic-minded men. Astronomy had to get rid of the astrologer; Medicine of the witch-doctor; Meteorology of the fellow who claimed he could forecast the weather for May 10th, five years ahead. Art is the same way. Until it eliminates the "clairvoyant" men who put on exhibitionistic rantings such as those quoted below (all by famous critics) it will remain in its present state of quackery — and you will remain the slick-talker's easy mark. This does not mean that you deny that experts may know more about art than you do. It means that you deny them the right to use that knowledge to brainwash you instead of to instruct you.

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It moves you completely out of the world of hocus-pocus, and does not require you to deny the existence of forces (such as Fatigue) whose all-pervading strength you are confronted with every day. Man moves ahead in art by tiring himself of art, at higher and higher levels, not by stagnating inside it. You can converse rationally among friends without having to run away into occult baloney every time your reactions chance to be different from theirs. It brings art up-to-date — much as evolution brought biology up-to-date — namely by abandoning the rigid certitude and making allowance for changing conditions. It's tough-minded and forward-looking, instead of sentimental and tied-down. Costs nothing to investigate.

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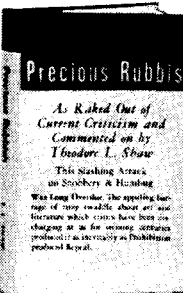
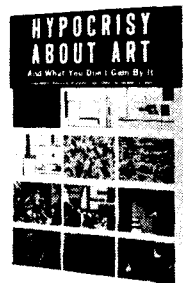
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T.R.B.

from
Washington

The Kennedys

★ Make no doubt about it, those Kennedy boys have established a new power axis here. There is Bobby, 39, the brown-haired, moody one; there is Teddy, 33, the dark-haired, genial one, and behind them there is Jack who scattered stardust over the other two. Anybody who saw Teddy last week in the Senate knew that he is a comer; he brought the homesick liberals within an inch, 49-45, of putting an anti-poll tax amendment into the civil rights bill against the efforts of the Johnson-Dirksen-Mansfield consensus leadership. He did it suavely and agreeably in an environment where nearly every man present was old enough to be his father. Or grandfather.

The Kennedy boys are Senators – one from a state with 14 electoral votes, the other, 43 – who began at the top; and they are bright, beautiful and bold. I don't think they have a "feud" with Mr. Johnson but their attitude is very, very correct. Bobby took issue with the Santo Domingo operation last week (after the President rather tactlessly said he wasn't going to sit in a "rocking chair" and let a Latin country go Communist). Teddy, for his part, took issue on the poll tax matter. Each brother has a voice with a shivery resemblance to Jack's; each has a conspicuously handsome crop of hair amidst the senatorial baldpates – Teddy's, for example, seems to be a kind of bouffant cowlick.

Come Back in 1980

★ When we go under a humming, high-tension power line we always get a thrill. We know that somewhere

water, coal or nuclear power is making electricity. America is becoming a grid. Come back in 1980 and you will find one vast, magnificent interconnected system. Already the 100 biggest groups supply 89 percent of power; 97 percent of this is more or less interconnected in five large networks.

Is this system well regulated? Well, yes and no. The Federal Power Commission was set up in 1935 and does a pretty good job on the interstate basis. It investigated wholesale rates in Washington not long ago, and we got a reduction. It did the same thing for towns like North Attleboro, Mass., and Liberty, Texas, and has 35 proceedings pending. Naturally the power companies don't like it.

The FPC polices interstate companies but the states are supposed to police local companies and retail rates. The state regulatory commissions are often terrible. It is part of the near-collapse of state governments. Maybe the states will be rejuvenated by the Supreme Court's reapportionment decision.

Some local regulatory commissions try to do a good job, but how can a couple of commissioners and a clerk evaluate a huge corporation? The rule-of-thumb is that six percent is a fair return for a monopoly utility. But an FPC study of 188 major private power companies showed that 111 had seven percent or more. The fact is, the regulatory agencies in a lot of states are in the pocket of the power companies.

A Strange Coalition

★ And now an extraordinary thing has happened which for sheer gall surprises even this blasé town. A strange coalition has appeared, made up of power company lobbyists and state regulatory commissions. Its proposal is simple: it wants to cut the heart out of the FPC's police power. It is the old motto. Turn it back to the states! Introducing the bill were the two Florida Senators, Holland and Smathers. Florida has one of the weakest state regulatory commissions in the country. It does not even try to regulate fair prices in some areas where other states protect the consumer. A reporter from the *Miami Herald* last fall visited the Florida PUC and wrote that with "a stingy budget and an overworked staff" it was merely ad-

ministering "laws lobbied through the legislature by the utilities themselves."

It is too bad that Rep. Claude Pepper (D, Fla.) isn't back in the Senate where he used to be. Maybe he will take on Holland or Smathers one of these days.

Speaking for the entire FPC, Chairman Swigler testified that the Holland-Smathers bill would destroy "effective regulation of the electric power industry." The frightening thing is that this raid should even be tried. The stakes are enormous. In the normal course of things electricity is going to get cheaper and cheaper. Big generators, better transmission, power pooling all point to it. By 1980, the FPC figures, consumers should save \$11 billion annually, if the economies are passed on to them. Will they be? Only if there is a big FPC policeman standing guard. We believe the FPC is under attack simply because it is doing such a good job.

Enlisting the Poor

★ We try to spot trends in Washington, and now we think we see a new one. It springs from an ambiguous phrase, the most revolutionary thing, perhaps, in the whole anti-poverty program. The phrase orders local officials to enlist the poor, to "the maximum feasible participation," in planning and operating the expanding programs.

What does this mean? Well, Europeans are always amazed that America has no unemployment riots. There would be riots instantly in Europe, they say, if unemployment there were as high as five percent. Here the idle are politically inert. Affluent America, actually, has only just discovered poverty. Not surprising, really; our well-behaved poor rarely agitate.

But now there's a new ingredient. As federal machinery for aiding the poor is set up, representatives of the hungry and unemployed are being appointed to local organizations. The effect stuns a lot of city political machines: New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit. The poor are getting articulate. Where it will all lead we don't know: to chaos, maybe; but the reports are beginning to come in from all over the country. Washington is a good listening post for this sort of thing. A vehicle for protest seems to have been handed the poor, and it's only just beginning.

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Deeper and Deeper

Lyndon Johnson has to look out when Senator Eastland, *The Chicago Tribune*, Joe Alsop and, by inference, Barry Goldwater shower praises on his policy in the Dominican Republic and Vietnam. That isn't consensus, it's captivity. The appetite for action grows by what it feeds on. "Castro's Turn Next?" exuberantly asked the brashest of the three national newsmagazines last week. In Paris, just before dropping in on a tattooist called Bruno to have the insignia of an honorary chief of the Hopi Indians engraved on his left fist, Barry Goldwater paused long enough to clench his right. If he were Lyndon Johnson, he said, he would now "pray for a provocation to bomb Communist China's nuclear installations." Columnist Alsop surfaced in London with a bizarre – coming from him – demand that American critics of US foreign policy wear muzzles. His theory is that the *Times* of London and similar left-wing foreign publications are disseminating a distorted view of US actions in the Dominican Republic, that they get by reading the slanted news printed in the *Times* which is published in New York.

Sure, the President of the United States has to make tough decisions. He is even entitled to decide for instant action without waiting to consult Congress or any other body, if he strongly feels that the security of the country demands that. But how many people seriously believe that Marines were rushed to the Dominican Republic because the United States was in peril? Nothing said or revealed since suggests convincingly that the US was in danger. Mr. Johnson's tough action is cheered loudest by those who want only strong-man right-wing governments in Latin America. As Mr. Goldwater remarked in Madrid, "I think this [Franco's] is a fine system and I have great admiration for what Franco is doing."

But last week in the Dominican Republic this simple-minded philosophy had hit a snag. When there are more strong men than one, which do you pick? At first, the US seemed to be backing General Wessin y Wessin, the military chief who overthrew democratically elected President Juan Bosch in 1963. Then it appeared to wish to switch to General Antonio Imbert Barreras (who incidentally was *persona non grata* to the US in 1962), but Wessin betrayed an embarrassing disinclination to step aside. In this fix, the State Department announced that it would not recognize any government until that government had demonstrated it "is in control of the political machinery of the Dominican Republic." In fact, the Marines and other US forces

as well as the USIA and the Voice of America had all along been supporting the discredited and beaten junta that includes both Wessin and Imbert, but at this point former US Ambassador John Bartlow Martin, the one American in Santo Domingo who seemed to have Mr. Johnson's ear, finally got around to seeing the "rebel" leader, Colonel Francisco Caamano, until then an untouchable who the State Department had said was "moving closer to the Communists." After more than 17 days of US military occupation the situation in the Dominican Republic was still dangerously up in the air, with tempers still tense and fingers on triggers.

The US has to find a way out of its Dominican imbroglio soon. Another "strong man" won't do, unless it is US policy to multiply Communists in Latin America by offering democratic forces no other sanctuary save some Communist variety. Fortunately, as suggested in these pages last week, there is a way out that ought to be generally acceptable to Washington, the Dominican people, and the OAS. Freely held elections, under the watching eye of the OAS, will get the US fairly off its Dominican hook.

And Vietnam? Though Congress voted overwhelmingly to give the President the \$700-million military appropriation he asked for but did not need, there is large, growing disquiet about our entrapment in South-

east Asia. Senator Robert Kennedy (who also criticized the President for acting overhastily in the Dominican Republic and without consulting the OAS) said carefully that in Vietnam "efforts for peace should continue with the same intensity as efforts in the military field"; an indication that he thinks they haven't. Senator Cooper, a Republican and former Ambassador to India, urged the President to "continue his efforts to find some avenue for negotiation" in Vietnam.

Mr. Johnson tried hard to suggest that he is doing just what Kennedy and Cooper want, when he spoke last week in Washington, but his speech to a group of editorial cartoonists contained nothing new. If only "our adversaries" will stop fighting, the US will help transform Southeast Asia — presumably including North as well as South Vietnam — into a paradise well-stocked with sweet potatoes. Once again, the Soviet Union and "every other industrialized country" (China?) was invited to help "this great Asian project." Meanwhile, though the US is "ready for unconditional discussions" it will "not abandon our commitment in South Vietnam," and "force will meet force." The President reiterated his belief that China is the evil genie behind Hanoi and wants the war to go on; nevertheless he invited North Vietnam to "come to the conference table." But it is also part of his thesis that Hanoi controls the Viet Cong in the South and therefore it's no use asking the Viet Cong to come to the conference table. The two things don't hang together. If the US wants to try to end the war and believes that "there is no purely military solution in sight for either side," the Administration should be willing to talk to the Viet Cong. It says it won't.

So the war will go on for a while longer, with all the horrid consequences for the hapless Vietnamese, both North and South, that the President harrowingly described: the bombings and the napalm raids, the killings and kidnappings, the diseases and epidemics, the untended sick and the hungry children. The air raids on North Vietnam have had no perceptible influence on Hanoi, except possibly a toughening one. In the South the Viet Cong guerrillas, also apparently undaunted, are mysteriously regrouping, perhaps for a major offensive. Mr. Johnson found it "incredible" that "there are a few who still say the South Vietnamese do not want to continue this struggle." Of course he meant the Saigon government's forces, not the guerrillas. But the South Vietnamese army's desertion rate apparently remains high, and Saigon's bid to raise 100,000 more men seems unlikely to succeed. What many members of Congress fear is that the US will try to improve the military balance by pouring in thousands more American ground troops as well as intensifying the air assaults on the North. The danger of still further escalation of the war has not diminished.



Things To Come

Voting rights for Negroes and equally apportioned legislatures are the underpinnings of the civil rights movement in the South. A hint of things to come can be seen in the Democratic primary victory of Julian Bond for the Georgia House of Representatives. Bond is information director of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, whose motto has been "one man, one vote," and he is one of its most articulate and competent leaders. He is 25 years old. He ran against a venerable Negro minister, the Reverend Howard W. Creecy Sr., who was endorsed by the *Atlanta Constitution* and the Negro conservative establishment – a weighty group in Atlanta. Bond beat Creecy better than two-to-one.

For years rural counties controlled the state legislature. Under the Supreme Court's reapportionment ruling, Georgia's House will reflect population, not geography. Bond's district in Atlanta is heavily Negro. There is no serious hindrance to Negro registration or voting, and it was natural that a Negro should be elected. What was unexpected was that a socially radical youth could beat a traditional leader. Bond campaigned not only for civil rights but for a \$2 minimum wage, repeal of the right-to-work law, abolition of the death penalty, better education and more progressive anti-poverty and urban renewal programs. His stance was the antithesis of Tomism.

Atlanta is a kind of *Freistadt* in the South, and it is not everywhere that Negroes, let alone a SNCC official, could work within a white political party. For Negroes in Mississippi, there was no alternative to the Freedom Democratic Party. The refusal of the white Democratic Party there to allow any meaningful Negro participation (the state is half Negro) pushed the civil rights movement there to an increasingly militant pole. A SNCC worker in Mississippi could not conceive of being a regular Democratic candidate. Bond's decision to run as a Democrat in Georgia points up SNCC's unconcern with a doctrinaire approach to politics.

Bond runs against a Republican in the general election next month. His opponent is also a Negro, the dean of men at Atlanta University. Bond is favored to win, but in any case there will soon be seven Negroes in the Georgia House of Representatives; they are the first since 1907.

Cigarette Ads

As predicted, the Senate Commerce Committee has voted to report a bill requiring tobacco manufacturers to place a mild health warning on cigarette packages –

and stay for three years a proposed Federal Trade Commission rule providing for a similar warning in advertising. Advertising is what sells smokes.

In any substantive sense, this bill is a disgrace. The tobacco industry never has been able to refute the government evidence linking cigarette smoking with cancer. The industry argument is so weak that the tobacco people now consider it a *victory* to be made to put health labels on packaging in lieu of something worse in advertising.

The Big Secret

The federal government's big purchasing agencies maintain their own consumer reports service to keep from getting gypped on products they buy. The cost is borne by the taxpayers, but the results of quality tests and other product data are kept from them on the general grounds that disclosure might hurt industry marketing practices.

The purchase of hearing aids is one good example. The Veterans' Administration, which operates an excellent – and probably the only – independent quality testing program in the country for hearing aids, will not tell the public what it finds out. The VA buys hearing aids for deaf veterans; the information it gets through testing enables the agency to bargain sharply. It pays \$125 on average for each instrument. The public often pays between \$250 and \$350 for a hearing aid, and even then, according to testimony before the Senate antitrust and monopoly subcommittee in 1962, the average consumer doesn't know what he's buying. If he did, and were able to withstand the come-on of the hearing-aid salesmen, the consumer probably would decide in favor of an instrument costing \$150, little different from the more expensive variety. As it is, people with hearing difficulties have been known to go through 10 hearing aids while trying to sort out one product from another.

The General Services Administration, the government's major purchasing agent, either tests, or has the National Bureau of Standards test for it, a number of consumer products that give the government trouble; among them, flashlight batteries, electric light bulbs, ball-point pens, typewriter ribbons, anti-freeze, hand tools and paints. What it learns is kept secret.

In his consumer message to Congress, John F. Kennedy promised to pry loose some of this information, so that the public might benefit from its own investment. Nothing came of that promise. Now Esther Peterson, the consumers' friend in the White House, is pleading with Mr. Johnson to fulfill it. In particular she is working with the Veterans' Administration to make hearing-aid information known to all.

Federal Subsidies to Segregated Hospitals

Congress passed the Hill-Burton Act in 1946 to help finance local hospital construction. It was one of the few federal laws since Reconstruction to sanctify racial segregation as national policy. "Separate hospital facilities" could be provided for "separate population groups," that is Negroes. In practice, the Hill-Burton Act (Senator Lister Hill from Alabama) has frozen separate-but-unequal facilities into some 2,000 hospitals and clinics in the South, and it will take the devil's own time to unfreeze them.

Title VI of last year's Civil Rights Act makes it plain that federal funds cannot go to segregated hospitals. If that were not enough, federal courts decided in the landmark *Simkins v Cone* case in 1963 that segregation in community hospitals, as in community schools, is unconstitutional. But segregation continues still, and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare – charged with dispensing funds to the hospitals – is not yet doing much to end it.

Early this year, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc., began filing complaints against segregated Southern hospitals with HEW. The list now numbers 78, and it is rising. Discriminatory practices, the NAACP lawyers say, range from racial segregation of patients by wards or floors, to refusal of staff privileges to Negro doctors. The Lakeland (Fla.) General Hospital put white patients in a new building financed by Hill-Burton funds and shunted Negro patients to the old one. The Macon City (Ga.) Hospital gives one Negro doctor "courtesy privileges" but not staff status at the hospital, then keeps him out of the white doctors' dressing rooms, consulting rooms and other facilities. The Jackson-Madison County (Tenn.) General Hospital keeps all Negro patients on the first floor, then moves them into the hallways to make room for whites when the upstairs rooms are filled. Negroes, and not whites, have to pay a \$50 deposit before they are admitted. Huntsville (Tex.) Memorial Hospital has a Jim Crow section and when it is filled, puts new Negro patients in the halls even when there are empty beds in the white section. Good Samaritan Hospital (West Palm Beach, Fla.) admits only white patients. Its board president said recently that with Negro patients "costs would go up and income would come down." The Laurens Memorial Hospital in Dublin, Ga., wants to build an addition this summer with Hill-Burton funds. In March, "Colored" signs in the hospital were removed; on April 5, two Negro women patients were moved to the white wing; on April 21, at 7:30 a.m., Negro babies were moved to the white nursery and the Negro dining room was locked; at 11:30 a.m. the same day federal inspectors arrived; two hours later the in-

spectors left, the Negro dining room was unlocked and employees sat down to lunch in segregated facilities, and the Negro babies were returned to the Negro nursery with their heads draped.

The dismal, humiliating record of discrimination is so long and so clear that HEW should have little difficulty in making a finding and withholding assistance. Instead, the Department has made only two rulings since the Title VI regulations went into effect in January – and in both cases, hospitals were cleared for federal funds without actual compliance.

The Dixie Hospital in Hampton, Va., segregated patients racially by putting most Negroes on one floor, whites on another. In January, under legal pressure and fearing for their federal assistance, the hospital's trustees voted to end discrimination. But three months later Negroes were still segregated. On the basis of the unfulfilled promise, the complaint was dismissed and the hospital declared in compliance. The Department overlooked the firing of the three Negro nurses for "insubordination," which is to say they wanted to eat in the all-white hospital cafeteria.

The Columbus County (N.C.) Hospital operated segregated wards, nurseries and eating facilities. It has no Negro staff physicians. On March 2, two regional, and one Washington, HEW investigators inspected the hospital. The report, by a Southern regional HEW director, said that the officials of the hospital "seemed to be most anxious to comply with the provisions of the Civil Rights Act." On March 29, the trustees "announced that all discrimination and segregation are being eliminated." On that promise, HEW ruled that in fact the hospital was "in full compliance."

The promises did not satisfy the NAACP lawyers. They complained again, that "full compliance cannot be found until nonracial assignment of patients is a reality." HEW sheepishly reopened the investigation of both hospitals, rescinded the findings of compliance, and appointed a team of eight investigators (six whites, two Negroes) from outside the South to dig into the backlog of complaints that the Southern staff was too busy, or something, to attempt. HEW pleads lack of staff and no enforcement machinery: a valid enough claim, although the NAACP would like the Department to try harder to speed the process. HEW Assistant Secretary James M. Quigley argues that "it takes time to bring about voluntary compliance [and] we may be exposed to the complaint of 'moving too slowly.' All things considered, I don't really believe we are." Not one of the NAACP complaints, however, has been resolved.

ANDREW KOPKIND

Steel Nationalization Is Not Around the Corner

London

The Labour government has bought party unanimity on the nationalization of steel at a heavy price. At the eleventh hour, minutes before the Commons was due to vote, George Brown, deputy-leader, rallied Labour waverers on the right with a compromise proposal. If the steel industry comes forward with a scheme, short of 100 percent take-over but giving the government effective control, the government will listen. The trick was turned, and Labour, after a week of acute speculation, chalked up its full majority of four over Conservatives and Liberals combined. But with this vote, the principle of no concessions to party minorities, the principle on which Wilson has claimed to base his government since last October, was openly destroyed. Just one day after the Prime Minister had reaffirmed to a party meeting on steel that his answer to potential rebels was "Go to blazes," he concurred in open bribery, and edged away from 100 percent nationalization for the sake of a decent showing in the division lobby.

Predictably the government says that there is no real change in its position. The steel industry will not come forward with an acceptable compromise plan, and the government will in due course press on with its bill to take over wholesale the 14 major steel firms, 90 percent of the industry with a combined production of 30 million tons a year; larger even than the United States Steel Corporation.

However, there is little chance of the envisaged National Steel Corporation functioning during the lifetime of this Parliament. Even if the government managed to juggle itself a majority of one or two in the Commons, the Lords will certainly throw out the bill. There then follows a pause of one year before the Lords' objections can constitutionally be overridden. Add to that 36 weeks between the eventual Royal Assent and the start of the new nationalized system, and you are well into 1967. The number of politicians who seriously believe that there will not be another general election before then can be counted on the fingers of one hand. In other words, the final decision on steel rests not with this Parliament, but with the next.

Without the last-minute compromise with the right-wing of the Labour Party—Desmond Donnelly and Woodrow Wyatt in particular—it would have been possible for Wilson to have presented the party's left-wing with a rational case for delay, once the principle of nationalization had been affirmed. The effect of the compromise, and the possibility of new discussions with the steel industry, is to arouse considerable suspicion and hostility on the left. For the fourth time in

this Parliament the left-wing of the Labour Party is being asked to abandon entrenched positions. They argued for increased old-age pensions to be paid out by January, and got them in April. They argued for the abandonment of the independent nuclear force, and have got instead the Atlantic nuclear force scheme which is getting nowhere. They argued for a distinct government line against US operations in Vietnam, and are told that the government is doing what it can to bring about peace *within* the context of support for President Johnson. And now, a shift of emphasis on steel, at their expense, to satisfy the consciences of a minority at the other end of the party. Before the vote, Ian Mikardo, a seasoned man of the left, made it clear that in his view the government's original plan could be improved on. In particular, he found the suggested compensation terms costing over £500 million excessive. If there's to be fresh backtracking by the government, Mikardo and his allies can be relied upon to make it rough for Wilson. The right-wing steel rebels have pointed the moral. Minority pressure is now not only permissible, it works.

It would pay Wilson to try to bury the steel issue as quickly as possible. It bedeviled the last Labour government; it is bedeviling this. It has been constantly unpopular with the electorate. In 15 years Gallup polls have never registered more than 40 percent in favor of nationalization. The current reading is 30 percent in favor, 52 percent against. And the new nationalization plan is already affecting the public's voting intentions for the next election. What was an eight percent Labour lead two weeks ago has now been translated, again by Gallup, into a two percent lead for the Conservatives. The government must choose a better battle-ground for the next election.

It is dangerous, moreover, to assume that the Conservatives will flinch from forcing an election. Certainly if Labour ties itself in knots with internal squabbles over steel, the Conservatives will take every advantage offered, no matter who their leader may be. The Conservative leadership "problem," which gives Labour both amusement and encouragement, is bound to be settled one way or the other by the autumn. Grass-roots soundings are currently testing the strength of the opposition in the party to Sir Alec Douglas-Home. Sir Alec is unlikely to give way in the absence of a reasonably clear successor. At the moment there is little to separate the three main contenders, Edward Heath, Reginald Maudling, Iain Macleod, and the Conservatives can hardly risk the first run of their new election machinery until they are fairly sure of a clear-cut result. They do not want any repetition of the high-jinks that occurred when Macmillan retired and Home took over. The odds are, then, that Sir Alec will stay, partly by default, partly by virtue of party solidarity

that will increase if Labour continues to run into trouble.

The Liberals too will be forcing the pace on steel. It is the one issue on which they can make radical noises utterly distinct from Labour. Whatever Wilson does next, the Liberals hope to benefit. If he presses on with the full bill, the Liberals stand to pick up votes at a general election. If he does come through with a compromise plan, say to take over only 51 percent of the equity, then the Liberals can claim they were there before him, that he has given in to them.

So, with the Conservatives and the Liberals clamoring to know what the government plans to do, and with the Labour left-wing pressing for a retraction of the concession given to the Labour right, Harold Wilson will need all his tactical skill to get the government

speedily off the hook. Given the canniness he has already shown, it would be rash to assume he will not be able somehow to find some way of smothering steel before the next election. But the maneuverings will take up valuable time. The government may have good reason to regret that they did not let the steel "rebels" "go to blazes." There would still have been a bare majority for the government of one or two, but it would have been the rebels, not the government, who would have taken the blame for any subsequent shelving of the bill. Now, by offering an olive branch to a handful of men on the right, Wilson has surrendered a substantial slice of his authority. He has been accustomed to demand a full Labour turnout in the Commons as of right. Such unanimity in the future will have to be diligently worked for. BRIAN WENHAM

Trial of the Klansman

A Ranting Attorney, a Hung Jury

by Murray Kempton

Hayneville, Alabama

When an Alabama country jury confessed its failure to convict Collie Leroy Wilkins of first degree manslaughter in the murder last March of Viola Liuzzo, Wilkins' mother ran through the rail to kiss his fat cheek and say, "There now. I tole ya." Yet a Southern jury had come so close (two votes) to sending a white man to prison for killing a civil rights worker that the first time this happens cannot be far away. It is likely, in fact, to happen to Eugene Thomas, William O. Eaton and Wilkins, Mrs. Liuzzo's putative assassins, when they are tried again next fall.

Mrs. Liuzzo, a Detroit housewife, was shot on the road back to Montgomery, a few hours after the climax of the civil rights march from Selma. Four members of the United Klans of Alabama were arrested almost immediately; one of them, Thomas Gary Rowe, had joined the expedition as an FBI informant inside the Klan; the Department of Justice had therefore a direct eyewitness. Mrs. Liuzzo died in Lowndes County, and the trial was set therefore in Hayneville, a forgotten market town of 400 persons cut off from the tumults associated with Montgomery and Selma.

The issue was debated then in an atmosphere as

close to a vacuum as could be imagined in Alabama. The defendants from Birmingham were almost as alien to Hayneville as Mrs. Liuzzo herself had been. One of the main barriers to conviction in matters like this before now has been the fact that the murderers live at the scene of the crime, and thus profit from neighborly prejudice that "so and so is a good boy and wouldn't have done nothing like this."

Southern juries like to think they are acquitting innocent men; the Klan all but demanded that this one set free a patriotic assassin. That was a little too much; in the end the jury almost convicted.

Things had started as they always do, with the Klan owning the courtroom. The trial began with Collie Leroy Wilkins bored in his seat; he is 21 and looks like any member of some quartet, calling itself the Dreamers or the Drifters, which appears on "Hullabaloo." He would be, a Hayneville girl said, "dreamy" if he'd take off a little weight. Robert Shelton, Imperial Wizard of the United Klans of America, sat at the defense table beside him. None of their opponents dared indicate sympathy with the deceased, even to the extent of confessing an ability to pronounce her name. Very early,

defense counsel Matt Murphy, who is also Imperial Klonsul of the United Klans, extorted as his right the custody of the effects found on her person after her murder; Shelton was observed with her membership card in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People beside him like a trophy.

Matt Murphy began the attack early. He asked the state's toxicologist whether Mrs. Liuzzo had the marks of a hypodermic needle on her arm. He asked whether the body showed evidence of recent sexual activity. He asked a state investigator whether there had been a Communist Party card in Mrs. Liuzzo's purse. The answers to all these questions were negative; but Matt Murphy did draw from the toxicologist the admission that her feet had been dirty. In the recesses, Ralph Roton, director of the Klan Bureau of Investigation, remorselessly worked his way through her letters; her light beige leather pocketbook, still stained with blood, was empty and open; her lipstick, a color photograph of a little boy, and a plain photograph of a little girl, were all mixed together beside it. Whether or not the Klan would ever be punished for her murder, it could enjoy the privilege of violating her in death.

The first witness hostile to the Klan was Leroy Moton, who had been Mrs. Liuzzo's companion the night she was murdered. Moton was the only Negro among the witnesses; he is a full-time worker for Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference; even so, he was careful to take the oath standing a little behind and well-separated from the other testators. There seem to be no new Negroes resident in Hayneville; and the only one who came there could not long maintain the posture.

Murphy hammered at Moton for the last detail of the seating arrangements when Mrs. Liuzzo was ferrying marchers back to Selma from Montgomery.

"There was three whites and one Negro in the back of the car," Leroy Moton answered. The jury seemed riveted. And what had Mrs. Liuzzo been doing just before the shots were fired?

"She was singing 'We Shall Overcome'," Moton answered. "And whaddya trying to overcome?" Murphy bellowed and what answer Moton had was engulfed in the laughter of spectators and jurors.

Leroy Moton said that he had been alone in the car with Mrs. Liuzzo for half an hour after he remembered shots being fired from a passing car.

"What did you do with Mrs. Liuzzo?" Murphy demanded. "What kind of gun did you have in the glove compartment? . . . Didn't you shoot her and rifle her pocketbook and get that money?"

Poor thin Leroy Moton bent under this wild tide of unsupported surmise and could only turn his head and smile uncomfortably and say, "You're trying to pin something on me; that's what you're trying to do."

His innocence seemed utterly useless in the face of dementia of conviction so deep.

Gary Thomas Rowe came later in the afternoon, with the birds chirping through the windows of the old courtroom, with judge and jury spent and drowsing in the declining sun and no one quite awake except Robert Shelton, clutching Mrs. Liuzzo's NAACP card.

Gene Thomas of the Bessemer Klan had, Gary Rowe began, invited him to travel to Montgomery on March 25 to inspect the final ceremonies of the march from Selma. Gary Rowe had called the FBI and asked, "Did they want me to go and they certainly did." He had for five years been an expense-account FBI informant inside the Klan.

They had driven to Montgomery in Gene Thomas' red-and-white Chevrolet Impala - "Gene Thomas, Bill Eaton, me and Lee-roy Wilkins - the gemmun sitting over there." And Gary Rowe pointed his soft plump hand with its red hairs toward Collie Wilkins who sat at the defense table, his forefinger pushing the rolls of flesh toward his right ear. They were both fat young men, with incurious eyes.

After the march, Gary Rowe went on, they had gone to Jack's Beverages to drink beer for an hour, and then over to Selma for more at the Silver Moon Cafe in



Champions of the Master Race

Selma. And there Gene Thomas found a friend. "Yawl ought to know him," he explained. "He's one of the men out on bond in the Reeb killing." (James Reeb was the white clergyman who was murdered in Selma.)

They left the Silver Moon after 45 minutes and Gene Thomas' friend called out, "Yawl go do your job. I already done mine."

"Hold on, Boys"

Gene Thomas' Chevrolet wandered at length back to the road to Montgomery, where it was stopped by a traffic light. There and then its passengers became aware of an Oldsmobile "with a white lady and a colored man in the front seat."

"Looka there, baby brother," Leroy Wilkins said to Gary Rowe, "I'll be damned. Looka there."

The pursuit was wild, barely purposeful, interrupted again and again by accident.

"Get on this side," Gene Thomas said once. "We're gonna take 'em here." He reached down between the seats to get his revolver; then Gary Rowe saw two military policemen standing beside their jeep on the road ahead. Gene Thomas dropped back; they came up again a few miles further on; and Gene Thomas said, "All right, here we go, hold on boys," and just then they saw the highway patrol and had to slow down again to appease the radar. Gene Thomas pushed his Chevrolet to attack again; but they were passing a two-story house "with 50 people standing around, mostly colored" and fell back again. Rowe suggested giving up after all these misfortunes, but Gene Thomas said: "You're in the big time now. We're gonna take that automobile."

At last Gene Thomas could say, "We're in the swamp area. That's as good a place as any"; and he handed his revolver to Wilkins and they got their rear window just even with the driving window of the Olds, "and the lady driving looked directly at us and, as she looked, Wilkins fired."

"We went ahead and Gene Thomas said, 'All right, men, now shoot the hell out of them,'" and Wilkins and Eaton emptied their revolvers. I looked back and that automobile was coming down the road just as straight as if someone in this room was driving it. I said, 'You missed', and Wilkins said, 'Baby brother, I don't miss. That so'n so is deader than hell'. And Gene Thomas said, 'Baby brother, you're just shook up'."

They watched the Olds trail down a side road and die, and then they started for Bessemer. "Let's go over to Lorene," Gene Thomas suggested. "Who's Lorene?" Gary Rowe asked. "You don't know everybody you should," Gene Thomas answered. "Lorene's a real good friend of mine, the organization's and the sheriff's."

At Lorene's, they had another beer and stayed 25

minutes and, when they left, Gene said that Lorene would supply an alibi for everybody: "She never lets us down." Then Gene Thomas took the red-and-white Chevrolet home and Gary Rowe went to a pay phone to call the FBI in Birmingham.

After Rowe finished, journalists and defendants alike went back to Montgomery. Gene Thomas was among the first to leave; he was driving a red-and-white Chevrolet Impala.

The state came back the next day to offer the FBI's ballistics testimony; Matt Murphy gave it his most complete contempt. It was then his turn; he opened by introducing Mrs. Liuzzo's pocketbook for no better reason than to put her NAACP card into evidence. Lorene came on; she turned out to be an arthritic old lady in shower sandals; she could not remember just when she had seen Gene Thomas, let alone Wilkins, in Bessemer the night of the murder. Matt Murphy had spent just 23 minutes on the defense.

It came time for the summations. Carlton Purdue, solicitor of Lowndes County, began for the state. "You have the opportunity," he told these jurors, "to stand up and say 'murder must stop'." They seemed to have the faces of unattending schoolboys.

Then Matt Murphy stood up for the defense. He would speak to them, he said, "as one white man to another white man." He read them the Klan vow of secrecy: "I swear that I will never yield to bribery, flattery, threats, punishment, passion, persuasion, or any other enticement. . . . I will die rather than divulge." Gary Thomas Rowe had, he reminded them, betrayed his God and that oath when he joined the Klan as an agent for the FBI. J. Edgar Hoover had, Murphy said, "taken away this investigation from your own white sheriff." FBI agents are Catholics. White Zionists like Jack Greenberg run the NAACP and "are nothing but white niggers."

"As for this white woman - where is that NAACP card? - she had a black nigger riding with her. The black man hasn't morals, manners, dignity or courtesy."

Matt Murphy began, quite suddenly, to jerk and rage about how God had damned the sons of Ham and how this woman was trying to overcome God Himself. Colie Wilkins was drowsing in his chair. A wet, gray gleaming cowlick came down over Matt Murphy's right eye; he held up his hand and began to rave about rabbis and white women and niggers and nigger women, and Judge Worth Thagard told him his time was up, and his fit passed away and he said that he knew that, as Americans and patriots, they would find the defendant not guilty.

Something unexpected had already happened. Four of the jurors were fidgeting with obvious discomfort; two of them looked at Matt Murphy with real affront.

Plainly, if Collie Wilkins walked away, it would not be because, but in spite of this speech.

The jury had been out only an hour and 17 minutes when there was a knock on its door and a message that it needed further instructions from the judge. Clifford McMurphy, their foreman, wanted to know if they could find Wilkins guilty of a charge less than first degree murder. Judge Thagard said they could, and they retired with a fresh pot of coffee.

For the next three hours, Robert Shelton desperately read Mrs. Liuzzo's mail in search of some revelation at which he could leap into the jury room and cry that he had found the truth and this nonsense could cease. Collie Wilkins wandered about; the state troopers had significantly withdrawn the fraternity they had shown

him all week.

The next day, at four o'clock, the jury quit. Clifford McMurphy told the judge, in that slight stammer which confessed how unassured he was even then of his own wisdom, that he had become convinced that "each of the men who are against conviction will remain constant in their beliefs and that each of those who support a conviction will remain constant in theirs."

"I don't know any jury that's tried any harder," Clifford McMurphy said. "I realize it's no use."

And then he told the judge, as though he wanted everyone to know how close this jury had come to the moment so long awaited, that the vote had been 10-2 for conviction.

Voting Rights Bill—Third Edition

The Voting Rights bill which the Senate has been debating is in its third edition, as Senator Talmadge of Georgia, an unfriendly witness, likes to call it. The first edition was the original Administration submission; the second was produced by the Senate Judiciary Committee on April 9; the present edition, which is likely to be enacted by the Senate with few changes, is the work of Mansfield and Dirksen and Attorney General Katzenbach.

The Senate Judiciary Committee version, as noted in these pages at the time, showed the influence of the liberal bloc in that it outlawed the poll tax, provided for federal poll watchers to observe whether Negroes registered by federal examiners are actually allowed to vote, and improved the section defining the geographic coverage of the bill. But this Judiciary draft also contained a very unfortunate amendment, sponsored by Senator Dirksen, permitting states and counties to escape from the bill's coverage without substantially remedying the effects of past discrimination. The Mansfield-Dirksen-Katzenbach version eliminates the provision outlawing the poll tax, and dilutes nearly to the vanishing point the provision for the appointment of poll watchers. Like the Judiciary Committee draft, it also omits a potentially very effective clause in the original Administration bill, which would have required federal courts to hold up certification of the returns in any election in which qualified Negroes had been kept from voting or had not had their votes counted. But the M-D-K edition also rewrites the Dirksen escape clause so as substantially to cure its defects, and satisfactorily changes a provision, somehow slipped into the Judi-

ciary Committee draft, that would have impeded access by Negro applicants to federal voting examiners, once the latter had been appointed.

How do the pluses and the minuses add up? The energies of liberal Senators have unfortunately been focused on outlawing the poll tax in state and local elections, which they tried last week unsuccessfully (49-45) to write back in by amendment from the floor. The House Judiciary Committee has approved such a provision, so the controversy is still alive. Professor Paul A. Freund of the Harvard Law School, in a letter to Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, has expressed the hope – or perhaps it was the guarded expectation – that the Court would uphold the power of Congress in this respect. But he has supported this expectation with examples of congressional power under clauses of the Constitution other than the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments – for example, the Commerce Clause – which may be thought to be inapposite. And so a constitutional doubt persists.

Nobody contends that at the moment the poll tax is the chief obstacle to Negro voting, and nobody can predict exactly how serious an obstacle it may become. For one thing, organized registration and voting drives will be necessary anyway. They will require substantial financing. The additional, nonpartisan financing needed to subsidize payment of the poll tax by the totally impoverished may not prove insuperable. The question is not whether the poll tax ought, of right, to be abolished – of course it should be – but what risks are worth running now in order to attain that end. The great achievement of the past two years has been a

federal legislative momentum. As civil rights problems become acute, or are felt to be acute by civil rights organizations in the field and are impressed as such upon the consciousness of the country, Congress, we now know, can be got to act fairly expeditiously. Nothing would more gravely endanger the maintenance of this legislative momentum than any sort of a decision by the Supreme Court that a portion of a federal civil rights statute is unconstitutional. Is the risk of such a decision worth running now, when little if any evidence can be adduced to show that the poll tax is systematically used to disenfranchise Negroes? Assertions – even the assertions of Congress – may not pass for evidence sufficient to upset what is otherwise the plenary power of the states to set voting qualifications. Moreover, unlike loose literacy and understanding tests, the poll tax is not inherently a device that invites discriminatory use, since it does not call for the exercise of broad administrative discretion. If the poll tax is inherently a device that discriminates against the poor, who are mostly Negro, it hits the white poor as well, and is not in this respect different from sales and license taxes. If it turns out that this Voting Rights Act does cause the segregationists to fall back upon discriminatory administration of the poll tax as a last line of defense, then next year or the year after Congress will have all the needed power to act on the basis of such evidence.

There is a poll tax provision, however, which was part of the original Administration submission, which runs no constitutional risk, and which should not be lost sight of, although it also is omitted from the Mansfield-Dirksen-Katzenbach draft. This is a clause forgiving the payment of past-due poll taxes by persons registered to vote by a federal examiner. Plainly, it will be Negroes, not permitted to vote in the past, who will owe such unpaid poll taxes. Their collection would therefore amount to a present discrimination based on a previous one.

The current poll tax is, in any view, an issue marginal to the prime purpose of the bill, which is the prompt registration of large numbers of Negroes. It is this prime purpose that could have been largely defeated by the Dirksen escape clause in the Senate Judiciary Committee draft. As rewritten in the third edition this clause now provides that a state or county can escape the appointment of federal examiners and the suspension of its literacy and other tests only if it proves that there will be no further discrimination and that "the effects" of past denials of the right to vote on account of race "have been effectively corrected." Proof of this has to be made to the US district court in the District of Columbia, not a court in the South. Even if the proof is satisfactory, the court will retain jurisdiction for five years, so that it may reopen the judgment

on motion of the Attorney General alleging that discrimination has been resumed.

What is most important about this provision is that it looks to the future and to the past, not merely, like the original Dirksen escape clause, to the present. As to the future, Senator Mansfield said in debate on May 3, a mere order in a state that all prospective voters, including whites now on the rolls, register afresh would not be enough. "No correction," said Senator Mansfield, "would be considered effective until, at a minimum, persons of voting age desirous of voting were actually voting after having been registered without discrimination." And Senator Mansfield added: "The only way a state could provide that a test or device would not be used for the purpose of discriminating would be actually to conduct registration or reregistration without tests over a period of time without any racial discrimination."

As it looks to the past, however, the provision needs clarification in debate, either on the Senate or House floor. In a state or county which has in the past registered whites without insisting on their being literate, or without insisting on other requirements that were, however, insisted upon in the case of Negroes – in such a state or county, the past discrimination should be deemed to have been "effectively corrected" only if for a period of time the same registration procedures are extended to Negroes as were available to whites. This need not mean that a state or county be required to freeze, for all time, the standards it has in the past applied to whites; or that a state or county be foreclosed from applying an impartial literacy qualification in the future.

The M-D-K bill as explained by Senator Mansfield unquestionably ensures that a state or county must correct its past discrimination by now impartially re-registering and voting everyone, white and Negro. The bill should also be construed to ensure that for at least one election a state or county will effectively correct prior discrimination by registering Negroes under the same standards that have in fact been used to register whites in the past, and by allowing them to vote under the same conditions. This point has not been clarified in debate. It would be extremely useful to have it authoritatively put forward.

In addition to being thus clarified in debate, the bill should be improved by amendments restoring the poll-watcher provision of the Judiciary Committee draft, and the clause in the original Administration draft under which certification of an election would be held up in cases where Negroes had been kept from voting or where their ballots had not been counted. The back-poll-tax provision of the original Administration draft should also be restored.

ALEXANDER M. BICKEL

Is Peace Still Possible?

The United States, China and Vietnam

by Edgar Snow

What would the United States accomplish by a major war in Asia – and why is it running that risk?

Since 1950 United States military intervention has prevented the People's Republic from completing the unification of China by "liberating" the island province of Taiwan from the control of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. That is the basic fact which has rendered all fruitful discussion impossible between the United States and China. It is also a keystone in the strategy which has built up to war with North Vietnam. Fixed by military alliances with South Korea, Japan, Chiang Kai-shek and Thailand, the American strategy has sought for a decade to close the armored perimeter around Communist China by securing a stable alliance in South Vietnam. If either Vietnam or Taiwan broke away completely from the American orbit it is thought that all the other positions would tumble after.

Yet the American protectorate in Taiwan rests on superior force almost as exclusively as does its claim to the right to bomb Vietnam. No mainland Chinese government, whether Communist or not, could recognize the legality of the present situation. Nor can or does the United States itself deny that Taiwan is legally part of China, as it unquestionably was before Japan seized it as booty after the war of 1895.

Taiwan's return to China was guaranteed by the Grand Alliance of Russia, the United States and Britain at Teheran, in 1943. That decision was further confirmed at the Potsdam Conference. In 1945 the United States assisted the then mainland Chinese government to restore China's sovereignty on Taiwan. Even after Chiang Kai-shek's defeat, in 1949, President Truman declared that the US would not intervene in China's civil war to protect the self-exiled Generalissimo.

Negotiations which would have led to Taiwan's more or less peaceful surrender were interrupted by the Korean War. After that, and before China intervened in North Korea, President Truman reversed himself by imposing a temporary protectorate over Taiwan as a wartime measure. The protectorate was later formalized when John Foster Dulles made a treaty of alliance

which bound the United States to Chiang Kai-shek.

In effect, the United States unilaterally punished China for its role in the defense of North Korea by detaching Taiwan and China's offshore islands from the mainland. Ever since then the United States has asserted that Chiang Kai-shek's defeated regime – a one-party dictatorship – must alone be regarded by the world as the legal guardian of the 700 million Chinese answerable to the People's Republic – also a one-party dictatorship. It has blocked mainland China from representation in the United Nations. It has imposed an economic boycott (no longer effective with other powers), illegalized American citizens' contacts with Communist China, patrolled the Taiwan Straits with its warships and planes, and maintained continuous illegal air reconnaissance over the mainland.

Since 1956 the government of the People's Republic of China has held monthly conversations at Warsaw with the United States, on an ambassadorial level, in an attempt to recover Taiwan by peaceful negotiations. The People's Republic has steadily insisted upon a legal solution to the Taiwan question and the problem of United States recognition of the Chinese revolution as the stable national power of China. It has demanded that the United States recognize its sovereignty over Taiwan – as 50 nations have already done – and simultaneously agree "in principle" to cease using armed force to prevent China's national unification. Premier Chou En-lai told me that once these matters of principle were conceded, the timing and manner of US armed withdrawal would be subject to negotiation.

The United States declines to make any such declarations. Its counter demand is that Peking first "renounce the use of force" against Chiang Kai-shek before further discussions. Peking has declined to make any such concessions; its view is that the United States has no more right to impose conditions over the conduct of China's internal affairs than China would have in the case of a civil war in the United States. In effect, Washington demands that Peking renounce the use of armed force in civil war as illegal, while recognizing the legality of United States armed

intervention in such a war. China cannot do that.

All China's leaders are united on Taiwan. Chairman Mao Tse-tung, Premier Chou En-lai, Foreign Minister Ch'en Yi have all told me personally that no compromise is possible. Peking's policy on Taiwan is probably immutable, at least as long as armed intervention continues there. During my recent visit I directly asked leading officials if Taiwan was the "only" dispute preventing normalization of Sino-American relations. All agreed that it was. China did not regard disputes affecting neighboring countries as part of her direct or national territorial quarrel with the US. Specifically, conflicting interests in Vietnam need not prevent restoration of Sino-American relations, "as between states."

Such is the "simple legal solution." The early American hope of a triumphant return of Chiang Kai-shek to the mainland – thus justifying the United States position that he is the only "national" government of China – has long since been abandoned. What practical reason then exists for continued rejection by the United States of normal contacts with China's 700 millions? The answer must be that the "simple legal solution" would mean a Christian admission of past error and excessive zeal on a scale intolerable to the self-esteem of the United States and to its pretensions to armed hegemony in the Far East. In President Johnson's idiom it is his Christian duty to maintain freedom, and there is no doubt his good intention is to hasten the end of social revolution under leaders called Communists.

For much the same reason, President Johnson has now ordered the air invasion of North Vietnam.

In the Chinese revolution, nationalism and Communism are twins, but they are not Siamese twins. They are not even identical twins. The same is true in Viet-

nam. John Foster Dulles, and American policy-makers dominated by his ghost, have insisted on treating them as Siamese twins. This misconception has led the United States into unilateral military intervention in Taiwan, and now, step by step, into war with Vietnam and an approaching war with China. It has, moreover, brought the United States into positions of increasing weakness and instability, and into deep moral, legal and political contradictions.

The United States good intentions in Vietnam are now clearly violating international treaties and laws, including the United Nations Charter, which it helped to write. It is obliged to rely on extralegal force – which it has so often charged against the Communists – to impose its good will on nations very remote from United States shores, and even more remote from them in human and historical conditions. Its invasion of North Vietnam lacks legal or allied support and has negligible organized support of enfranchised free men (if any) in Vietnam itself. To retreat is becoming impossible; to advance further may mean general war.

With the exception of Senator Wayne Morse and one or two of his colleagues, few American Congressmen care to discuss how the United States got a foothold in Saigon. No Senator even attempts to refute Morse when he periodically takes the floor to repeat his charges that the entire operation has been an illegal job of shoe-horning Americans into the colonial hegemony which France legally renounced in 1954.

At the Geneva Conference of 1954 France met with the Vietnamese, Britain, Russia, China, Canada, India, Poland and others to guarantee complete independence to Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. It was specified that no foreign military personnel should be stationed in Vietnam except for a few French technicians, who were to be withdrawn after 1956. John Foster Dulles refused to sign the treaty but Undersecretary of State Bedell Smith pledged the US not to obstruct fulfillment of its terms. That pledge has been consistently ignored.

As is well known, the end of the civil war left Vietnam divided at the 17th parallel. The division was intended to be temporary and the treaty specifically provided that regional governments of the two halves should rapidly restore communications. A national plebiscite was to unify Vietnam by 1956. Even before the treaty was concluded the US offered support to a man pledged to destroy it – Ngo Dinh Diem.

After President Eisenhower offered aid to Diem there was a farcical US-backed election. Diem ousted the legal head of the state, Bao Dai. With further US support Diem set up a dictatorship which rejected unification and violated other treaty terms. The US gave Diem large sums of money and arms and illegally sent in military experts. By 1956 a *de facto* protectorate existed. Diem initiated a large-scale manhunt to eliminate

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

EDGAR SNOW lived and worked as a foreign correspondent in China for 12 years. Representing publications such as The Chicago Tribune, The Chicago Daily News, and the Saturday Evening Post – of which he was an assistant editor for 10 years – he knew Asia under colonialism and was long an eyewitness of war and revolution in China and other Asian countries. He returned to China in 1960 for five months (for Look magazine) and was back again in the winter of 1964-65 for three months.

Mr. Snow is the only American writer authorized by the US State Department and the Chinese government to visit China. He is also the only person who has interviewed Mao Tse-tung for publication since 1949. Of the present inquiry he says: "Some of the observations here are sharply at variance with views officially held at Washington. I believe the facts are correct but recognize that they will be unpalatable to Americans conditioned by their press to confuse rationalizations and justifications of policies with information."

both his nationalist opposition and pro-Hanoi partisans or alleged partisans left in the countryside. Within two years Diem's control, which had been near-complete before the repressions began, disappeared over more than half the hinterland.

In 1958, after repeated appeals to implement the Geneva Treaty provisions to restore communications and establish a national government had been ignored by Saigon, President Ho Chi Minh retaliated. He openly called for revolt by anti-Diem forces in the South. Widespread guerrilla warfare ensued. The US steadily increased its military aid and personnel and Diem continued to lose ground. His assassination was at least welcomed by, if not directly ordered by, US agencies in Saigon. The numerous military regimes which followed Diem all failed to make headway against the National Liberation Front.

Despite Saigon's armies exceeding 400,000 men, plus paid auxiliaries of nearly 200,000, aided by more than 30,000 American military personnel and large air and naval armadas, the political decision in the South was, by 1965, already virtually won by the insurgent forces. Ho Chi Minh's regular army in the North had never crossed the 17th parallel. Americans insisted that his moral aid and infiltration of armed personnel into the South were responsible for their failure. Secretary McNamara in April guesstimated the figure of "infiltrators" at 39,000, or about one-tenth as numerous as the Saigon forces armed and trained by the USA. On that ground, President Johnson ordered air raids on North Vietnam and brought in American combat units. He has threatened to use every means – not excluding nuclear tactical weapons, according to Secretary McNamara – to force Vietnam to terms.

The Elusive Political Decision

As in its demands on China concerning Taiwan, United States objectives in Vietnam are equally insupportable for any independent nation. The Vietnamese are asked to renounce the use of force to overthrow a foreign-supported dictatorship, while recognizing American intervention and its use of armed force in Vietnam as legal. That is something no Vietnamese nationalist leader can do. But Ho Chi Minh is not only a nationalist, he is also a Communist. In the eyes of those who believe that any war against Communists is a holy war and provides its own morality which supersedes all legal technicalities, the United States is not an aggressor but a liberator. But much of the world is bound to disagree.

Objectively, and quite apart from moral or legal considerations, it is my view that the United States is now unwittingly entering a trap best suited to the needs of the nationalist-Communist defenders of Vietnam's in-

dependence. The political decision which has eluded the United States in South Vietnam most certainly cannot be won by air attacks on North Vietnam. Nuclear weapons of course could extinguish North Vietnam but that would not mean a political decision, either. It would bring responses which would likely mean world holocaust.

If the air invasion is confined to conventional weapons the probable consequence will be a gradual alignment of all Vietnam and much of Asia against the United States. Vietnamese may soon cease to fight Vietnamese. Around them the "dominoes" of Southeast Asia are already falling. Indonesia is "lost" and Cambodia is "lost." Both nations now recognize the National Liberation Front as the legitimate government of South Vietnam. Burma has voluntarily guaranteed China not to provide any bases to US forces. India and Pakistan oppose the US invasion of North Vietnam. SEATO is moribund. De Gaulle has specifically excluded French aid to US purposes in Eastern Asia. Nor can any of the other NATO powers promise serious support for a "wider war." Japan has also made known its desire to be "included out."

As the area of devastation broadens, American armies numbering into the hundreds of thousands – and American armies without any significant allies – may be required to defend the thousands already there as potential hostages of the Vietnamese. China may gradually be drawn in, and then Russia. As US positions of political weakness multiply around the earth it is not unlikely that Western volunteers may also be found to "support Vietnamese independence" on a scale perhaps larger than the defense of the Spanish republic.

Until last February, when the United States Air Force began its current program of systematic destruction of North Vietnam, it seemed possible that President Johnson would choose a peaceful way out of his inherited problems. Before I left China last January I had talks with Chairman Mao Tse-tung, Premier Chou En-lai and Foreign Minister Ch'en Yi. At that time all considered the possibility and even likelihood of events which have now transpired. All equally expressed the desire that there would be no enlargement of the war. On that assumption, Mao Tse-tung stated that a Geneva conference could be called and he included, among possible circumstances for such a conference, the continued presence of American forces in South Vietnam. I believe that Mao's view at that time coincided with the thinking of Ho Chi Minh. Foreign Minister Ch'en Yi indicated that China was then at least ready to discuss the "neutralization" of South Vietnam.

Contrary to impressions given by Washington spokesmen and the press in general, China is not running Vietnam. There are not, or at least until recently were not, any Chinese troops in Vietnam. But the

opinion of the leaders of the United States that in fighting Vietnam they are fighting China obviously has both a political and an emotional basis.

The truth is that the American chase in Vietnam is part of a larger hunt for China which has obsessed American power for 15 years. It may be compared to the lifelong pursuit of Moby Dick by the brooding New England whale hunter, Ahab. In Herman Melville's classic 19th Century allegory Ahab finds Moby Dick in his own element, the sea, and the giant whale had no intention of invading New England, Ahab's home. In his first attempt at a kill, Ahab loses a leg to Moby Dick. After that, it maddens Ahab to know that the whale is running free across the vast Pacific. He loves Moby Dick and he cannot rest until his lesson has been taught to that monstrous elemental power. In rational moments, Ahab sees his own reason and his frail sailing ship imperiled by his compulsive aim, but male-animal pride and passion spin his fate. In the end Ahab kills the whale and thereby destroys himself.

The Compulsive Pursuit

The American people as a whole has small interest in and a short memory for incidents in the far Pacific. But the collective Ahab who now defines American purposes in Asia perhaps thinks he lost a leg in China when the revolution succeeded there. His second encounter, in Korea, ended in bruised pride and stalemate. Since then the pursuit has been compulsive.

Melville's Ahab could by no means destroy the whale or change the nature of the whale by cutting up Moby Dick. His lifelong moral purpose thus had no valid reality. Is the American pursuit of China—through its tail-flukes in Korea, Taiwan and Vietnam—just as senseless, as profound, as inevitable, and as fatal? Or is there some way to halt the hunt short of catastrophe to Ahab, or Moby Dick, or to both?

The allegory has its limitations. "Hastening the passing" of Communist China has been the announced purpose of United States policy ever since John Foster Dulles so defined it many years ago. The contest is not one-sided, however. The Chinese response has been to extend its ideological struggle against "American imperialism" across all the seas and far into the flanks of American power in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

One may say that between the United States and China there is a bifocal undeclared war of varying degrees of intensity. One struggle arises from China's national ambition to unify all Chinese territory under one sovereignty, a goal blocked by the United States unilateral armed protectorate over Taiwan and the Penghu Islands. That conflict has all along had a means of peaceful solution in accordance with traditional concepts of national sovereignty.

The ideological struggle between Chinese Communism and American capitalism—or "neo-imperialism," as the Chinese see it—is another matter. That has no solution foreseeable to anyone but the prophets. As long as Communist China does not attempt to impose its views by armed invasion in violation of another nation's independence, however, the twins of nationalism and Communism should be considered as closely related but separate problems. This is a distinction which American policy has failed to make. Refusal to concede China's territorial sovereignty in Taiwan intensified and expanded the ideological war. Satisfaction of China's legitimate national demands for self-determination and unification could have resolved the Sino-American conflict on that level and modified the nationalistic passions invested in the ideological struggle.

Similarly, the United States contradiction with Vietnam is divisible into issues of nationalism or national sovereignty on the one hand, and differences over Vietnam's internal social revolutionary and world ideological sympathies on the other hand.

United States officials stress that the Vietnam issue is far wider than the country. If the rebels are allowed to exist—or even given recognition in negotiations—their example will be followed elsewhere. That is only partly true. Such means may succeed only where a ruling class and its foreign allies are as isolated from mass support as they are in Vietnam. What Americans seek to prove once and for all is that radical revolutions henceforth can be prevented from winning *anywhere*.

Vietnam is now a laboratory where the most advanced weapons are being tested against man. It is hoped that this research will produce a successful formula applicable wherever a social revolution takes to arms, whether in Asia, Africa or Latin America. "All power," said Mao Tse-tung, "grows out of the barrel of a gun," but his corollary is, "Man is more important than the weapon." That is, under able revolutionary leadership the have-not majority, however initially weak in weapons, can eventually seize power from any counter-revolutionary minority strong in weapons but politically degenerate. That is not to say that the have-nots will win on the first try, or even the hundredth try, or that they will win everywhere in the same way. What Mao and Ho and their followers assert is that even if Vietnam is submerged the revolution will rise again, and not only in Vietnam or Santo Domingo. Each defeat is a step toward victory.

Communist leaders have prevailed over more than one-third of the world by learning how to exploit intolerable conditions. Unless the conditions of the mass are changed in the potentially revolutionary countries, no "world political decision" can be won by superior arms alone. Among those nations with governments themselves founded on revolutionary victories—in-

cluding the American revolution – against rulers intolerable to the people, the bombing of North Vietnam amounts to acknowledgment of political defeat in South Vietnam. Each bombing nullifies more of the effects of years of costly prestige-building American preachments about respect for national freedom, sovereignty, self-determination and international law.

Apart from such political gains for Mao Tse-tung, some other advantages accrue to him. At home, the new dimensions of the war provide a useful lesson to silence skeptics among younger generation Chinese who may have doubted Mao's thesis, "imperialism will never change." Mao probably did not expect so many American forces to help him, so soon, to prove his point. For Mao this kind of war is an improvement over the Taiwan stalemate, where it was not possible to involve the United States in a direct struggle for political hegemony on the continent. American military operations against Vietnam must also increase tension inside the USSR, where the leadership may soon have to choose whether to abandon all further claims to leadership of the world revolution, or return to effective alliance with China.

As the danger grows that the test lab may explode and spill its weapons across the earth in universal catastrophe, is it still possible to negotiate a solution to prevent escalation of the Vietnam war into general war? That would now require United States acceptance of the only international treaty which defines Vietnam's national status and sovereignty. It would require the United States to halt its air assaults and announce an unconditional readiness to attend a conference to enforce the Geneva Treaty of 1954, which guaranteed Vietnamese freedom from foreign military interference. In such a conference the several regional regimes exercising *de facto* political and administrative power in Vietnam would all have to participate.

"An Attractive Way Out"

President Johnson, however, may have closed that way out by prematurely committing himself not to deal with the Viet Cong. Even to authorize the Saigon neutralists to do so now would badly damage his internal and world prestige.

The alternative, if the United States carries the war into Hanoi, the industrial heartland of the North, and the Chinese frontier areas, can mean a prolonged war of attrition, the ultimate limits of which no man could foresee. Once American ground forces in great numbers became locked in direct prestigious all-Vietnam battle with the regular Vietnamese armies, the visitors would find themselves in the same trap that held Japan's warlord armies ensnared in China after 1937. At enormous cost the United States could win many

battles and depopulate vast areas, but to make new deserts cannot bring peace.

Convinced that time, geography, human numbers and justice are all on their side, the Vietnamese and their allies are probably prepared to see all their cities laid waste, and return to fight it out in the hills and jungles, if necessary, rather than yield a political decision or any form of legal recognition of American rights of armed intervention against the sovereign rights of an internal revolution.

President Johnson is obviously aware of the danger. His advisers tell him he can avoid it. And in truth the conscious aim of the consensus President is not to gobble up China or even to devour the dolphin at his tail-flukes. When I was asked the question in China I said that President Johnson's true need in Vietnam was to find "an attractive way out" of war there, and I still believe that to be so. He has since tried to make it clear that he wants to help Vietnam, not hurt it. The bombing and burning of Vietnam and Vietnamese are full of good intentions. Has not the President declared his readiness to rebuild everything being destroyed (except human life) in a generous Christian way, by means of a billion dollars of help from the Great Society?

If Southern-based Vietnamese or Chinese or Soviet bombers were destroying New England would a consensus President agree to accept the invaders' good will or take their yuan or rubles in exchange for recognition of their right to be there to bomb the US? Is it correct to assess the national pride of Vietnam in far baser coin? It is a profound psychological error to suppose that the more a foreigner beats and flays any part of Vietnam the harder it must become for a consensus Vietnamese leader to unite all his people in a common cause of patriotism against the only visible foreign invader. The truth is just the opposite.

Ho Chi Minh won recognition as Vietnam's liberator throughout the whole nation when he led eight years of struggle for independence from the French. Those who shared in his victory have now opposed the United States for a decade. Could they reasonably be expected to do less than defend their dearly won national independence at whatever cost? "The Vietnamese have shown they are prepared to die for their freedom," Chou En-lai declared. "When a man is ready to die he cannot be conquered by threatening him with death. Tell that to President Johnson."

But is it not *freedom* that President Johnson wishes to give them? In truth, he desires that rather than a big war. He merely wants legal recognition for the United States right to use armed force to impose freedom as he sees it. In these perilous circumstances, Ahab must somehow be prevented from taking full charge. This can only be done if world opinion speedily unites to insist that the non-involved powers bring the belliger-

ents to a Geneva conference to define their differing views on freedom.

In the midst of preparing for nuclear attack – which the Chinese have considered a growing possibility ever since they blew their bomb – it was reassuring, in some indefinable way, to recognize an ancient sense of humanist philosophy in a few casual remarks of Communist leaders. After discussing matters touched upon in this report for an hour or more, Marshal Ch'en Yi said to me, "Whatever happens, it will only be an incident in the perspective of history and ultimately be

forgotten. The American and the Chinese people will renew their friendship."

Mao Tse-tung predicted that a deep commitment of American troops in Vietnam would speed up the victory of social revolution there. Then he remarked that the world was changing very rapidly and no one could predict how future generations would judge men and events of today. Probably all of us, he said, even Marx and Lenin – and I doubt that he would exclude President Johnson – would appear rather ridiculous a thousand years from now.

The Military Situation in Vietnam

The war in South Vietnam is being fought by close to 500,000 Vietnamese soldiers and 45,000 Americans (over 15,000 combatants) on the one side, and on the other between 120,000 and 130,000 guerrillas, of whom about 35,000 are now well-armed, regular troop formations, placed amid irregular forces that have roughly one automatic weapon for every 20 fighting men.

Between April 11 and 17, the government troops lost 315 weapons, the guerrillas lost 80. The difference is enough to equip two companies of Viet Cong. And this was not a "rush" period of the war, government setbacks having been relatively minor. Until mid-1964, the guerrillas' weapons were 80 percent Western; the regular fighters had American arms and the irregular fighters had French arms. About 10 percent of their weapons came from the North, the remaining 10 percent being made in the jungle or smuggled in from a number of places. But in the past six months the ratio of weapons coming from the North has risen to perhaps 25 percent.

It is weaponry above all that has changed the face of the war. American engineers have perfected a portable infrared apparatus which can detect the presence of any human being within 200 yards, no matter how well hidden he may be. They have invented the "lazy dog," a two-ton shrapnel bomb stuffed with darts which explodes 10 yards from the ground, causing terrible wounds to men and covering the ground with dangerous traps. They have presented the fliers with the slow-falling "snake-eye bomb," and equipped American helicopters with a bag of 200 grenades suspended from their bellies, which can annihilate everything within 2,000 square yards. The "bull pup," a tele-guidable device of 450 pounds of TNT, can destroy underground shelters. The new napalm is to its predecessor what new thermonuclear devices are to the Hiroshima bomb. Infantrymen now have a light automatic device which fires projectiles with a trajectory such that almost any wound automatically causes death, by making the flesh literally explode and by shaking the whole skeleton to pieces.

Some predicted that the air war against North Vietnam would provoke the North's 300,000-man army to cross the 17th parallel and invade the South. Instead, the guerrillas who have been moving their forces from the Delta rice

fields toward the forests north of Saigon may be hoping to create a huge "liberated zone" where they could form a government.

The rainy season begins in less than a month. From then on, the base held by the Marines at Da Nang will have a harder time communicating with the Air Force and the Navy than in the dry season. The American forces seem to be neglecting the plateau region, where the guerrillas who have come up from the South are consolidating. Which one is setting a trap for the other? The American command, by offering a target to its opponents so that they should prematurely throw themselves at Da Nang? Or the guerrillas by forcing the Marines to form a porcupine at Da Nang?

There remains the war waged against the North. From the "technical" attacks of August 5, 1964, to the great night raids, the Saigon fliers have come a long way and have three steps of escalation left before striking out at China. These are: attacks on the vital industrial centers of North Vietnam – the steel complex of Thai Nguye northwest of the capital, and the light-industry complex of Viet-Ri to the west; terror raids on the cities, Hanoi and Haiphong; finally, destruction of the dikes which suspend millions of cubic yards of Red River water over the heads of the peasants of the Tonkin delta – an operation which if ever carried out would make people talk of genocide.

Has the "limited war" against the North reversed the course of the fighting? A few days ago, Mr. McNamara answered this question with a "not yet." General Taylor indicated that as far as he was concerned it had especially had the effect of bolstering the morale of the Southern authorities. It is a fact that the pacifist campaigns launched by Buddhists have stopped, and the government of Dr. Phan Huy Quat, though under attack by the Catholics, seems to have acquired some sort of existence, at least in the immediate periphery of the government palace in Saigon. The situation in the South is no longer quite the quicksand that General Taylor was sinking into at the end of January. But the price has been heavy.

JEAN LACOUTURE

*A French journalist recently returned from Vietnam, M. LACOUTURE reported his findings in the April 19 *Nouvel Observateur*, from which this has been excerpted.*

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

Warren's Challenge to Race Dogma

by C. Vann Woodward

Conventional wisdom on race relations has it that communications between white and Negro Americans have broken down. One corollary to this proposition is that the white man can never really understand the Negro mind, and two others turn upside down the ancient clichés that only a Southerner really understands the Negro, and that the Negro only tells the white man

Who Speaks for the Negro?
by Robert Penn Warren
(Random House, \$5.95)

what he wants to hear. Robert Penn Warren's book is a challenge to all these tenets and dogmas. Warren is not only a white man but a Southerner, and he undertakes by personal interviews to understand what is going on in the minds of the leaders, spokesmen, and active participants of the Negro Revolution. The result is the most searching exploration of the thought and emotion, the tensions and conflicts of the greatest American social upheaval of this century.

The historian can only regret that he does not have on his shelves a comparable volume by an author of equal stature on the First American Revolution, the Antislavery Movement, the Radical Reconstruction, or the Populist Revolt. Such a book on the abolitionists, for example, would have provided insights beyond recapture on Garrison, Phillips, Birney, Theodore Weld, the Grimke sisters, Elijah Lovejoy, Harriet Tubman, John Brown, Fred Douglass, Gerrit Smith and scores of their collaborators.

And a book on the Reconstruction would have put to the men themselves the questions we are still asking about Summer, Stevens, Stanton, Ben Wade, and Ben Butler, the carpetbaggers and scalawags, and the young teachers and Freedmen's Bureau workers that were

the shock troops of that abortive revolution.

In the heat of battle, long before the monuments are raised and the biographies written, it is harder to pick the names that will survive in history. Warren makes no such attempt. He gives scrupulous attention to obscure figures, young and old, because of the role they have played and the experience they have had—country parsons, college students, working men. His is no systematic or sociological survey, but he has worked in the North as well as in the South, among the rank and file as well as among the junior officers and the big brass. Among the latter he has managed to record full interviews with the leaders of all the major organizations, including Martin Luther King, Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young, James Farmer, James Forman, Malcolm X, Adam Clayton Powell, Bayard Rustin, and Aaron Henry, as well as briefer accounts of some of their lieutenants. As a writer himself he has a special interest in the novelists Ralph Ellison and James Baldwin and is able to draw from them many fresh revelations about their attitudes to their work and the movement. There is a spirited exchange with Professor Kenneth Clark on John Brown and a philosophical dialogue with Judge William Hastie. Warren is at his best with the young people like Robert Moses, Gilbert Moses, Ruth Turner, Izell Blair, and Stokely Carmichael.

The main body of the book consists of transcripts of tape-recorded conversations, but the skill and subtlety with which they are conducted and the running commentary on them lift the interviews out of the level of documentary and literal reporting. By a patterned recurrence of basic questions and comparison of responses Warren turns the interviews into a symposium among the many he questions. The

novelist is at work as well as the reporter. "I want to make my reader see, hear, and feel as immediately as possible what I saw, heard, and felt." His characterizations are more than descriptions:

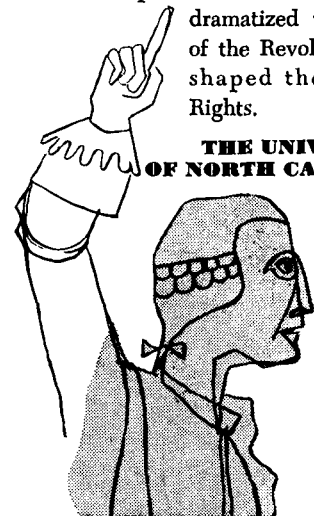
"James Forman is a combat officer. His inner peace comes only, perhaps, in the immediate outer clash. He is bitter, or at least impatient, about those who do not have his special kind of total commitment. . . . He lives with the ulcers that have nearly killed him, with the threat of violence in his daily life, with the mixture of pessimism and grim humor. He lives intensely, I should guess, and painfully, in a strange drama of compulsion, bitterness and hope. This is what makes him demanding to the imagination. He is engaged in

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a struggle for reality. For his own reality."

And this on Martin Luther King:

"Compactness and control—that is the first impression, even in the natural outgoing cordiality at the moment of greeting when the eyes brighten. At the handshake you notice that the hand is unusually large for a man of his stature, a strong hand. He has the tight-packed skin of a man who will be fat some day if he doesn't watch it, a skin with a slight sheen to its brownness . . . the physical compactness, the sense of completeness."

And Roy Wilkins:

"He is, clearly, a thoughtful man with something detached and professorial in his tone, and his smile has a certain trace of sadness in it, a faintly ironical sadness. You feel

that he knows a good deal about human nature, including his own—and yours. . . . He is prepared to deal with things as they are. He tries, apparently, to keep his mind firmly fixed on the thing, not the word; on the situation, not the shibboleth."

The Negro and his tragic plight and the white man in all the complexity of his relations with the Negro—especially in the Southern context—are not new or strange themes to Warren. They are woven into nearly all his fiction and much of his poetry. They are the central theme in *Band of Angels* and in his long poem, *Brothers to Dragons* and the subject of his short book *Segregation*. The present book is an extension of a long search for reality and truth. When he was asked, "What makes you think that Negroes will tell you the truth?" He replied, "Even a lie is a kind of truth." And he comments:

"But that is not the only kind that we have here."

There is, in fact, a surprising amount of candor in the responses he evokes to the awkward questions, the kind often evaded: the growing class cleavage among the Negroes, the feuds among factions, the alienating effects of "success," the use of race as an alibi, the "snobbery of being black," the exploitation of white masochism ("Beat me, Daddy, I feel guilty."), the white myth of Negro sexuality and the Negro's ambivalence toward it. "I am sure you know Negroes are bastards, too," remarks a SNCC worker. And Judge Hastie quietly observes, "You know all Negroes spend at least a little time hating white people."

In his chapter of summation Warren is merciless in his exposure of white sentimentalities, masochistic self-indulgence, and upside-down Phariseism. There is, for example, the "notion that the Negro—*qua* Negro—is intrinsically 'better,'" whether as Jack Kerouac's Noble Savage or the wise and witty milkmaid Kitten of *One Hundred Dollar Misunderstanding*. Or the notion that the Negro is going to redeem our spiritually bankrupt civilization, or the other side of the coin, that the white man is going to redeem the Negro.

Among the Negro leaders Warren finds no consensus and arrives at no pat generalizations. Instead he finds "an enormous variety of personality and talent," as well as "an enormous variety of attitudes and policies." No one leader is able to speak for the Negro. The numerous individuals who play roles of leadership display marked disagreement over fundamental issues of the movement. These include the nature of integration and race policy after achieving it; the efficacy of non-violence and the need for adhering to it; the objectives of demonstrations and the dangers of "overreach"; the guilt of the white man and his capacity to "understand" the Negro; whether the Negro's future is brighter in the South or the North; the relation of the Negro problem to the poor-white problem; basic policies of preferential treatment, civil rights versus economic emphasis, and political strategy in the immediate future and the long run.

The alternatives are not drift and con-

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"This book stimulates new thinking and ought to stimulate new policies as well."

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fusion on the one hand or ironbound, rock-ribbed orthodoxy on the other. "Fortunately," writes Warren, "a number of Negroes in key, or influential positions are men of intellectual power and depth of purpose, and these men have put their minds on these problems." The drive is not toward orthodoxy, but rather toward the imaginative and pragmatic exploration of possibilities. "In general," he concludes,

"the Negro leadership has given the public little reason to be appalled, for in a situation as complicated as this it level of idealism, dedication and realistic intelligence. If leadership of that quality is supplanted by other, less savory types that are already lurking in the wings, and that certainly do not have any vision of a reconciled society, the white man has only himself to blame."

went into politics, and since he was ambitious and knew how to influence people, he became President. Unlike the President, Jim MacVeagh is "wonderful in bed." He is also lazy, and according to his mistress he only uses half his brain. Still, he is a "lovable bum." This mistress, by the way, is also very sexy, something like the girl the President could have had when he was in college. She is "a big girl, built like a peasant, with a broad bottom and cushion breasts that always [make] men look a second time." She is also the secretary to the chairman of the Democratic National Committee. She's really fond of MacVeagh, and he likes her, too - in bed - but that's about all, because he has a sweet wife who loves him, and who forgives him:

"Jim wondered at the transformation in Martha. Gone was the skittering, frothy, cluttered woman who slid from project to project like a bug on ice. Instead she seemed composed, poised, appearing as content as he felt.

'Jim,' she said as though she had a

A President Goes Wild

by Gilbert A. Harrison

"Begin with an individual, and before you know it, you find that you have created a type; begin with a type, and you find that you have created - nothing."

- F. Scott Fitzgerald

This is a book by the co-author of *Seven Days in May* about a President of the United States, and he is not Lyndon Johnson, because he was born in Florida. It's a Washington thriller about politics, and fortunately you won't believe a word of it. The gist of the plot is this: Two important people suspect President Hollenbach is "off his rocker." At first, neither of them is sure,

Night of Camp David
by Fletcher Knebel
(Harper and Row; \$4.95)

and neither knows what the other is thinking. When they are finally convinced, they have a hell of a time persuading anyone else. The President is an artful fellow; he plays his wild cards close to his chest. But when the fever of the game is on him, he breaks out with some odd ideas. For example, he wants to set up a new Atlantic union composed of the United States, Canada and the Scandinavian countries, and he dreams of running it. That's certainly pretty peculiar, but not mad. Wait. He also wants to tap everybody's telephone, so he can find out what's going on. Most of us would agree that that is overdoing it. The deep-down trouble with President Hollenbach, however, is that he imagines that people are trying to do him in. You

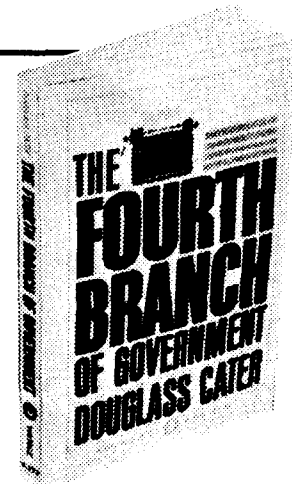
may think this is fairly normal suspicion for any politician. But again, the President carries it to excess. In the middle of the night, he summons Senator MacVeagh to Camp David; there he paces up and down in darkness (he likes to turn lights out), and we discover that he doesn't trust his Vice President:

"'I'm going to announce at my Wednesday press conference that O'Malley has decided not to be a candidate for re-election', said Hollenbach. . . 'He's out to grind me down. . . All right. I'll say it . . . to destroy me. . . His entire aim was to soil me, to rub some of his mud off on me, to make people think that I'm the kind of man who winks at sordid political payoffs in his official household'. . . Hollenbach came close and MacVeagh felt uncomfortable, as though he had unwittingly intruded on another's privacy. A disquieting emotion nettled him."

(Hollenbach doesn't trust the press either; he complains that a reporter has ridiculed him, and after "'I've given him at least an hour of my valuable time in separate interviews. . . Talk about biting the hand that feeds you. . . '")

Now MacVeagh is no Freud, but he has read the Sunday supplements. He decides to check up on the boss. He finds that when Hollenbach was in college he met this woman who was very sexy, and she tried to get the nice, young man to go to bed with her, but he didn't think you ought to do that until you got married. Thereafter, he

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window to his thoughts, 'it was as much my fault as yours. No man should have to put up with a wife who races around chairing commitments. He needs a woman in his home, and if he doesn't have one, he'll go out and find one.'

'Aw, Marty—' he protested, but she cut him short.

'I know I'm right,' she said. 'But I know something else now. You're my man, Jim MacVeagh, and I'm going to keep you any way I can.'

So much for the feminine mystique.

Ever since that spooky session at Camp David, when Hollenbach told MacVeagh he wanted him as his Vice Presidential running mate, MacVeagh has been bothered. MacVeagh would like very much to be Vice President, even though he is lazy, or perhaps because he is lazy. Nevertheless, he is upset by what the President tells him. He may not use all his brains, but he uses enough of them to worry about whether the President ought to be allowed to go off to Europe to meet with the head of the Soviet Union. Jim MacVeagh knows how important that meeting might be. Why, the President could lose his head and start a war, or give up Latin America, or anything. MacVeagh then discovers that Hollenbach has written a strange letter to his, the President's son, and there are a few other odd incidents. Finally, MacVeagh gets in touch with the Secretary of Defense, and finds that he, too, has had his doubts. They compare notes. The Secretary is a very smart man, just about the smartest man in Washington. Some people even speak of him as the most qualified man for the Vice Presidency, but he's Jewish, so that's out. The Secretary has been doing some sleuthing of his own. For one thing, the President's military service record has disappeared from the files. The Secretary has been trying, unsuccessfully, to figure out some method by which, constitutionally, the public can be saved from an unbalanced President. He and MacVeagh decide that the only thing to do is to assemble a few friends with influence and discuss what is to be done. The friends meet secretly at night, lights on, and listen while the two men try to convince them that the President must be stopped from meet-

ing the Russians, and in general from making a mess of everything. At first, MacVeagh and the Secretary are not believed, but by the time of a second meeting, everybody is convinced, and they proceed to put the manacles on their leader.

You probably think they do it, or that the President pushes the nuclear button, or that he shoots himself. Wrong. Knebel chickens out. The cunning President heads off MacVeagh and his Secretary of Defense and resigns, calling the resignation a long vacation. He turns over his office to the Vice President, the hated O'Malley. Hollenbach goes on television to say that he has had palpitations of the heart and must bid farewell:

"I hate to leave you, but I must. Thank you, God bless you—and God be with us all." The President's son, tears in his eyes, steps forward and shakes his father's hand. Mrs. Hollenbach puts her arm "protectively through that of the President." And as the picture fades, she is turning him gently away from the podium.

"I can't believe it," says Mrs. MacVeagh. And when she asks the Senator, "Do you still believe he was suffering from a mental breakdown?", the Senator replies: "I don't know for sure... and I hope to God I never have cause to find out."

"But what about his heart?" she asks.

"Mark Hollenbach's heart?" he replies. "I was never quite sure about it until right up to the end this morning. Now I believe he has the finest heart in America."

It's enough to give us all palpitations.

The executive vice president of Harper and Row says, in a memo to his sales staff, that he would put this book on the shelf along with *Advise and Consent*. I advise likewise.

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

C. Van Woodward is a historian who has written extensively about the American South. He is a professor of history at Yale. Guy Daniels is the editor and translator of a new book, *A Lermontov Reader*. His translation of Krylov's fables will appear later this season.

The Sorrows of Baro Finklestone

by Guy Daniels

American Campus Fiction has come a long way in the past few years. Once a mere tributary of the Main Current, it has by now so widened its bed that it has virtually replaced the Mother of Waters herself. And its thematic development has been no less impressive. Time was, ACF consisted chiefly of quasi-confessions by assistant professors. Today it consists of full confessions by full professors.

The latest novel borne to us on this sluggish but broad current is *Back to*

Back to China
by Leslie A. Fiedler
(Stein and Day; \$4.95)

China, the story of a full professor by a full professor, and for (presumably) The People. Its author, moreover, is a person acutely aware of what might be called the Occupation of America by the troops of Academe, as witness his collection of essays, *Waiting for the End*. Not that Leslie Fiedler has really pioneered in this field: grim warnings of the coming academic take-over were being issued more than a decade ago by (*primus inter alia*) a less prominent namesake, the poet and essayist Leslie Woolf Hedley of San Francisco. But whereas such prophets as Hedley, having foreseen the evil, resolutely stood apart from it, such an epigone as Fiedler, having become aware of it later, resolutely remained a part of it.

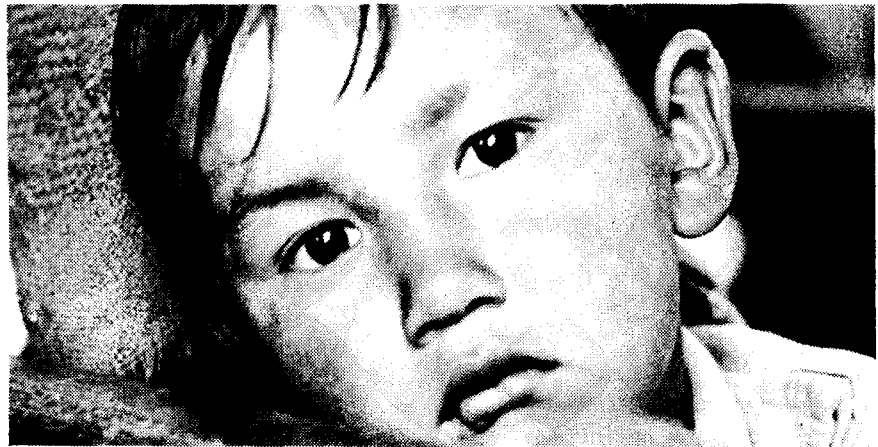
Whether this was a Good Thing or a Bad One, I'm not yet quite sure. Probably it was Good; because however conjectural Fiedler's talents as a creator of imaginative literature (i.e., a person who, to use his own word, should not be a "captive" of the academy), there is no doubt as to his ability to analyze the sociological aspects of America's academization. (Certainly, on such subjects as the social mobility of associate professors, he has no peer.) But whatever my hesitations on this score, I am serenely unassailed by any uncertainty in the other important matter: motivation. If Leslie Fiedler chose to remain within the Academic Establishment while at the same time despising

it, it was because he was fascinated by the very "evil" he condemns. In this respect, as in many others, he exactly resembles the narrator-hero of *Back to China*, who has the improbable name of Baro Finklestone, and whose confessional tale lays bare the truth about himself as a *fink*.

Finklestone ("a full professor of Philosophy with tenure and three published volumes") is a kind of mountebank *malgré lui* who is never quite sure whether he's wearing a cap and gown or cap and bells. Without a doubt the most confused character in one of the most confused books in modern fiction, he has a total of one clear goal in life: to hate his cake and eat it—as he does those peyote buttons that make him retch so violently.

He loves "the absolute East"—represented, for him, by the China he knew in the aftermath of World War II—but he chooses to live in "the absolute West," present-day Montana. (The novel is narrated in a series of switchbacks between the two locales and the two moments in time.) He loathes the sterility of academic life (paralleled by his own voluntary castration) yet perseveres in it, vain of his title and prestige. Each of his personal relationships begins in love and ends in betrayal—on his part.

Or rather, what he imagines to be betrayal; because Finklestone is such a glutton for guilt that he exultantly claims it as his own even when his title to it is far from clear. It is never made quite plain, for instance, whether he really did betray his father figure, a Japanese urologist named Hiroshige whom he met in Tientsin. All we are actually told, along with a few hints, is that he accompanied the Kuomintang officers when they went to arrest Hiro-



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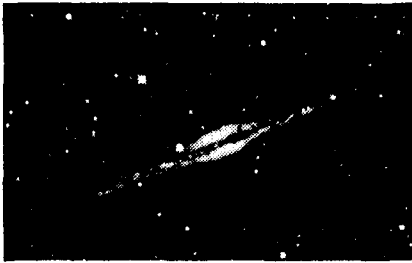
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shige as a war criminal. And the same murk of mental confusion surrounds his "murder" of George Ducasse, an American Indian beatnik, drug addict, and sometime student who is his surrogate son. George perishes in a highway accident after a drug orgy. Finklestone was not driving the vehicle that killed him; nor did he "turn George on" to the drug habit. It was the other way around, in fact. No, nothing so simple as that. It seems that he "murdered" George by procuring a fellowship for him!

Granted, George was no great shakes at facing up to reality (especially with all that peyote in him); and it *was* a Rotarian Fellowship, after all; so I suppose one could make out a case here for the guilt of Father Fink. ("Father Fink to us all," George had called him, the night of his death.) Besides, Father Fink himself testifies elsewhere that the *causa causans* of his protégé's death was "the childish game of America-baiting in which he had already collaborated too long, of which George, taking it more seriously, had died." Something to chew on there, eh? Still and all, as an exercise in forensic metaphysics it's considerably more work than it's worth.

Not so the other betrayals: they are crystal-clear, not to say trite. The sterile Father Fink betrays his childless wife, Susannah ("a homely *shiksa* from Radcliffe") by the expedient—all too familiar from God knows how many dreary campus novels—of making out with little *shiksa* sophomores. (As Ronald Berman has said recently, in—as it happens—a review of *Waiting for the End*: "Right now to be both Jewish and a professor is more erotically dangerous than to be Richard Burton.") And he compounds his other betrayal of poor old George by shacking up with Shizu, George's Japanese wife.

This latter boudoir bit is dreadfully and deliberately banal, including such geisha garnishments as the back massage. But the whole thing is redeemed by the characterization of Shizu, a perfect little horror in whom a Japanese talent for lying is perfectly mated with exquisite American vulgarity. One minute she is telling Finklestone "how it was" at Hiroshima; and the next she is saying, "I was born in L.A., lost my cherry to a guard at a Utah Relocation Center, and met George. . . ." Fiedler,

in his own way, is a first-class cultural anthropologist, whether he is dealing with "assimilated" Indians, Jews, or Japanese; and Shizu is his prize exhibit—the Japanese imitator surprising her original with a vengeance. She is, indeed, responsible for most of the sparse comedy in this allegedly comic novel; and I am reluctant to leave her without one more quote. When charged by Finklestone with selling her baby, she replies: "What was I supposed to do, starve, while that sap of a George assumed the Lotus Position?"

But except for Shizu (and, in a less gruesome way, Irwin Grayfox, with his long braids, buckskin trousers, Sigma Chi pin, and flashy Thunderbird) none of the characters are really comic. All of them are phonies, including the chief clown himself—a phony funnyman. Not that he doesn't try hard for laughs: every time he stumbles into a new mess, he drops his professorial manner and makes with the grimaces. Nor is he deterred by the most unlikely topics. Even from Hiroshima he tries to get yocks, yet. And when his castration at the hands of Dr. Hiroshige has finally been accomplished, one half-expects him to shout exultantly, "Look, Mom! No glands!"

But it's no go; and Fiedler knows it, even if Finklestone doesn't. (At any rate, such is my belief. If I'm wrong, God help Leslie Fiedler!) Not only that, but he does his damndest to sabotage his own character's efforts at clowning. Invariably, he will step on Finklestone's would-be comic lines. Or he will describe a pratfall in disastrously solemn Correct English. Or again, he will remind the reader how feeble Father Fink's jokes really are. ("Some of your best sisters are Sisters, is that it?" Baro had said, making the kind of bad joke that always tempted him when he found himself at an utter loss." To which George answers that

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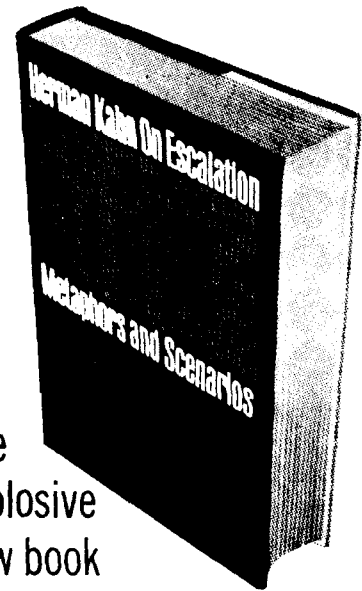
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he wouldn't laugh at that one "even in class.") And finally, Fiedler makes sure that *Back to China* will fail as a comic novel by narrating it in deliberately dull language—in a kind of droning Classroom Prose replete with such lecturer's filler phrases as "of course," "in any case," etc. ("He had not flown in the plane that had dropped the Bomb, of course." No, of course NOT.) If, after a few pages of such stuff, one remembers that Fiedler has written some fairly decent critical prose, one wants to cry out: "Fiction should be at least as well written as criticism!" But it wouldn't help; because, I am convinced, this is wilfully bad writing. *Back to China* is, in today's sterile jargon, an "anti-comic comic novel"—in short, literary Pop Art. Fiedler is nothing if not fashionable.

Now that the Pop novel is with us, I must confess to some disappointment: I had been hoping it would be written in at least, say, early *Chicago Tribune* prose. But then Classroom Prose, admittedly, is more effectively dull. And besides, Fiedler has endowed his little artifact with a few cute touches that should win him a wide audience of

pop-eyed readers. One in particular I must mention in closing: the use of Accident in an art form (or "non-art non-form") conceived as a Game. At the end of *Back to China*, Finklestone the castrated clown thinks, to his simultaneous dismay and delight, that he is an expectant father. In a completely Casual Accident—so casual that she can't even remember it—poor sherry-besotted Susannah has been impregnated by a pathetic beatnik "student" appropriately named Rodney—a bearded homunculus so totally ineffectual that one wonders how he ever managed it. And the whole novel is put together, with somewhat less than Nabokovian skill, as a game of chance in which the stakes are Fiedler's favorite commodity: guilt. "I made you feel guilty, didn't I?" Rodney asks Father Fink. "What more can your generation ask of mine?" Well, a great deal more, which we are in fact getting, though not from the likes of Rodney. And in return I should think we owe them something more than deliberately bad novels—or the facile sophistry of the newest Fiedlerian conception: guilt as *gelt*.



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FILMS

Impertinences and Investments

Cat Ballou is in an ancient tradition of youth. It is a comic Western, and it mocks certain audience expectations in that vein, but its principal reason for being is just to let loose some youthful hell-raising on the screen. There have been several films in the last few years that attempted *jeux d'esprit*—*The*

golden geese keeps it generally amusing. Essentially it is not a satire of Western clichés, which are too easy—and almost too venerable—to satirize. It is simply a frolic with not many holds barred.

The year is 1894. At the start, the heroine, Cat (named in honor of Ian Fleming's Pussy Galore?), is in jail sentenced to hang. The film tells us how she got there: how, after finishing teacher's college she returned to her Wyoming home to find her father, a small rancher, harassed by a giant land combine that wanted to drive him out; how she and he and his young Sioux helper hired a famous gunfighter to oppose the combine's gunfighter. Two young bandits, whom she met on her homeward journey, also teamed up with her. To detail the plot would

Cat Ballou (Columbia)

Il Successo (Embassy)

Male Hunt (Pathé Contemporary)

Backfire (Royal Films International)

Troublemaker, *A Hard Day's Night*, *That Man from Rio*—and of this recent crop, *Cat Ballou* is the best American example. It lacks the surrealist light-heartedness of the Beatles film and the superb skills of de Broca, but its consistent determination to goose several

necessitate detailing the switches and surprises – to make clear that the plot is only an armature for irreverences; and to do that would be to spoil the fun. Just one sample: after her graduation, the demure Cat is escorted to the crowded train for her trip home by her schoolmistress, who, for safety's sake, seats the girl opposite an upright young man in clerical garb. No sooner has the older woman left than the young man grins sleepily from ear to ear and says happily, "I'm drunk as a skunk."

In the best film in which she has so far appeared, Jane Fonda plays Cat and gives not quite her best performance. (Also, Jack Marta, the cameraman, seems not to have learned how to light her attractive but unusual face until the picture was well along.) Tom Nardini is pleasant as the young Sioux. Stubby Kaye and the late Nat Cole make a vigorous pair of balladeers who continually wander through. But the old catch-phrase, "stealing a picture," is given new life by Lee Marvin's performances. He plays both gunfighters. The Bad One has a tin nose – replacing the one bitten off in a fight. The Good One is an alcoholic so liquid that only the right amount of booze – *exactly* the right amount – can sober him up. Burlesque, menace, stylish carriage, rubbery invertebrate stupor – all these and much more are easily in Marvin's grasp, contained in an incisively commanding presence. It is usually said of a virtuoso performance by a featured player that it will make him a star. I devoutly hope that will not be true here. Marvin is much more valuable with the freedom to come in as a non-

star and cut great dazzling swashes around a film.

The picture's shortcomings resolve to some shortcomings in the director, Elliot Silverstein (a name new to me). At this stage of his career, his appreciation of wit seems to me more literary than theatrical and cinematic. He knows what is funny; he is less secure in making it funny on screen. The script by Walter Newman and Frank R. Pierson – from a novel by Roy Chanslor – is neatly wrought in shape and dialogue, and Silverstein is clearly in rapport with it. But his understanding and control of acting are shaky. Some of his casting is quite weak (the two young bandits, Cat's father); but even with these actors, and with Miss Fonda, too, a director with a sharper ear could have sharpened the readings. Some of the lines are funnier than they sound. Additionally, Silverstein's visual powers – in movement and composition, in camera use – are at the moment quite ordinary. He is not yet in the company that, presumably, he wants to join: the line that includes Preston Sturges and Stanley Kubrick. But this film is so far above the commonplace that we can enjoy it while waiting for him to improve.

Notes on some films are more apt in the form of a stock-market newsletter. The Vittorio Gassman industry is doing reasonably well. Their staple product – the fast-talking, chameleon, basically likeable Italian con man – is gaining public acceptance, and this season's product, *Il Successo*, is a safe middle-of-the-road product. VG looks like a fairly reliable growth stock.

The Jean-Paul Belmondo industry, now zooming, runs the risk of overproduction. Two new items in the last month crowd the market and show signs of rushed output. In *Male Hunt* JPB shares the load with other male stars but supplies only more of his usual. In *Backfire*, with Jean Seberg, there is very much more of his very familiar amoral adventurer. Questionable management of the JPB operation can be suspected. Without a change of policy, this one should be watched closely for signs of peaking off. Present indications: OK for quick returns, not a growth stock.

STANLEY KAUFFMANN

A Communication

Vietnam Policy

Sirs:

President Johnson says his Vietnam policy is the same as President Kennedy's and was established by President Eisenhower. But President Eisenhower sent no combatants to South Vietnam. President Kennedy sent few, and he did not extend the war to North Vietnam. Shortly before his death he said: "In the final analysis it is their [the South Vietnamese] war. They are the ones who have to win it or lose it." President Johnson has turned a civil war in South Vietnam into an American war in all Vietnam.

President Kennedy and President Johnson have said we defend the freedom of the people of South Vietnam. Yet no one suggests that the people of South Vietnam chose Diem or any of the successors who, like him, have held brief authority in Saigon subject to the will of the local military. We are defending the efforts of these men to rule an unwilling people. If the people of South Vietnam had been willing to be governed by any one of these men, with our enormous help he could have extended his rule over the whole country. But the men in Saigon have made little progress since Walter Lippmann said: "The truth, which is being obscured for the American people, is that the Saigon Government has the allegiance of probably no more than 30 percent of the people and controls (even in daylight) not much more than a quarter of the territory."

President Johnson says "Our one desire and our one determination is that the people of Southeast Asia be left in peace to work out their own destinies in their own way." But North Vietnam as well as South Vietnam is in Southeast Asia. No forces but ours prevent the people of Southeast Asia from working out their own destinies in their own way.

The President says "we seek no more than a return to the essentials of the Agreements of 1954." But he also says "we will finally settle for no less" than an "independent South Vietnam – tied

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to no alliances." In sharp contrast, the Geneva Agreements of 1954 endorsed a unified Vietnam. The line they drew between North and South was not to be "interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary"; it was purely "provisional," to last only until 1956 when a general election in the entire country was to be held under the supervision of an international commission. With our encouragement, Diem's Saigon government refused to take part in a general election because he would have lost it. Also, the Agreements of 1954 prohibited "introduction into Vietnam of foreign troops and military personnel as well as of all kinds of arms and munitions." Except to complain that North Vietnam violates this prohibition, we have always ignored it.

The President says we are "committed" and "America keeps its word." He says "We are there because we have a promise to keep. Since 1954 every American President has offered support to the people of South Vietnam." The implication that all promises should be kept regardless of consequences is of course merely rhetorical.

Our Constitution does not authorize a President to commit the United States to any policy, foreign or domestic, for a period of years or decades. It is easy to remember that a President is not America and a President's word is not America's word. What lies behind President Johnson's rhetoric is that he will make America keep *his* word as long as he can.

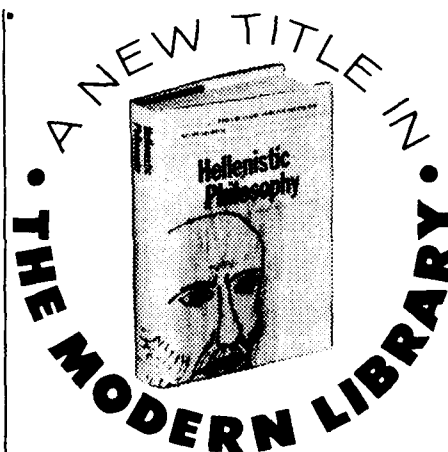
Congress has supported the President's policy, but the President and Congress together cannot bind their successors. They cannot even bind themselves. Any policy may be revised, any law may be repealed.

Promises are made not only by someone but to someone. In Saigon there have been a number of different governments, most of them established by force, in the last eighteen months. A promise to one of these is not a promise to the one that overthrew it and was in turn overthrown. As the President has said, "we have a very difficult situation there as a result of the instability of the governments and the frequent changes of them." As for "the people of South Vietnam," most of whom have shown no liking for any Saigon government, they would probably be

glad if the President would take his promises and go home.

The President says the "basic cause of the conflict in Vietnam is the attack by North Vietnam on the independent nation of South Vietnam." But it is too late to say the basic cause is not a civil war in South Vietnam. President Kennedy said in 1963 "the civil war" had gone on for ten years. The Communist rulers of North Vietnam did not send substantial support to the Viet Cong in South Vietnam until Diem had acquired American support and had repeatedly repulsed North Vietnamese efforts to have a general election. President Johnson calls the North Vietnamese "aggressors." If the Saigon rulers were popularly elected or firmly established, and in control of the country, helping their Viet Cong enemies might well be called aggression. Since none of those premises is true, if the North Vietnamese are aggressors, so are we, and if we are not aggressors, neither are they. Even this understates the case. The people of North Vietnam are ethnically, geographically, historically, and culturally close to the people of South Vietnam. We are remote.

Despite high-sounding slogans about keeping our word, defending freedom, and letting people work out their destinies, the fact is we are fighting to prevent an election that we think "Communists" would win. We are said to have a "vital interest" in containing Communist China. But we can no more contain China by waging war in Vietnam than China could contain us by waging war in Honduras. As Arnold Toynbee has said, Americans are "a bit paranoid about Communism." If Vietnam chooses some form of Communism, it will not be choosing China, will not be increasing the power of China, and will not be harming us or capable of harming us. The Vietnamese, North and South, fear and dislike the Chinese. And even if our effort to prevent Southeast Asians from choosing their own government could promote some interest of ours, it would still be a sorry throwback to the day of the white man's burden and lesser breeds without the law. The suggestion of an analogy with Munich is groundless. When the Sudetenland was yielded to Hitler he had great power, had invaded Austria, and was a threat to the



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whole western world ("Morgen die ganze Welt"). The Vietnamese threaten no one but each other.

Our vital interest is in reducing the danger of nuclear war. By continuing and escalating the present war we only increase the danger.

Southeast Asians have had more than enough of rule by white men and will not voluntarily submit to rulers protected by white men. To most Asians and many others, we now appear to be the last colonial power except Portugal. The sooner we cease to act as a colonial power, the sooner we shall begin to recover some of the prestige it has cost us. The French began to recover some of theirs when they left Algeria.

We have not and never had any good reason for killing Southeast Asians and devastating their countries. It is hard to admit we have been wrong, but dogged perseverance in a mistake is no virtue. Getting out now is said to be unthinkable. To me, staying in is unthinkable.

Shorter steps toward peace might be taken. Secretary General U Thant has well said "It is not possible for me to say what would be the best means . . . but I do feel very strongly that means must be found, and found urgently, within or outside the United Nations, of shifting the quest for a solution away from the field of battle to the conference table." U Thant suggested and the President rejected a revival of the Geneva Conference. Whatever else we do, we should at least propose a simultaneous cease-fire by all four parties to the war, North Vietnam, the Saigon Government, the Viet Cong, and the United States. India, Canada, and Poland, as the International Control Commission, might arrange the cease-fire and supervise it.

The President offers what he calls "unconditional discussion." Yet on April 17, 1965, he said "we will finally settle for no less" than an "independent South Vietnam—tied to no alliance—free to shape its relation and association with all other nations." This puts what may prove to be a major issue of the war, unification of Vietnam, beyond the reach of ultimate negotiation and therefore of meaningful discussion.

Henry W. Edgerton
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